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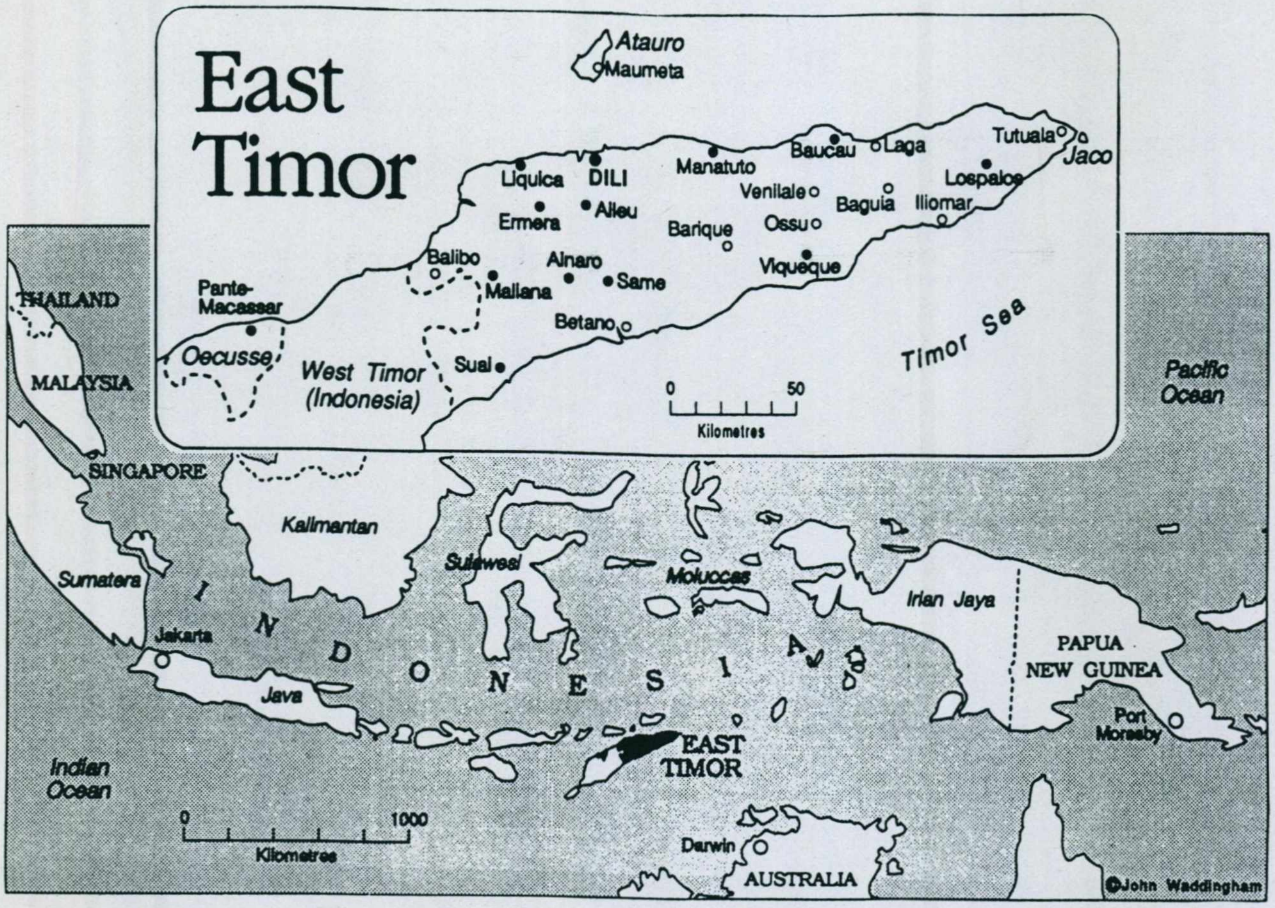
THE CHURCH AND EAST TIMOR

A collection of documents by
National and International Catholic
Church Agencies.

Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace
(Melbourne Archdiocese)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Jaco
Baucau
Laga
Manatuto
Liquica
DILI
Lospalos
Venilale
Baguia
Iliomar
Ermera
Aileu
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Sumatera
INDONESIA
Jakarta
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Java
Port Moresby
EAST TIMOR
Indian Ocean
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1000
Kilometres
Darwin
AUSTRALIA
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CHRISTIANS IN SOLIDARITY WITH EAST TIMOR (C.I.S.E.T.)

Christians In Solidarity With East Timor (CISET) is a practical response by Australian churches to help end the suffering endured by the people of East Timor and build relations and mutual support with them.

CISET began as an ecumenical group formed in Melbourne in 1982. Following the visit of Pope John Paul II to East Timor in 1989, a group of Australian Christians came together to further explore ways of building solidarity with the Church and people of East Timor.

CISET aims to design and implement strategies for support within the churches in Australia for a negotiated and just settlement of the conflict in East Timor. It aims to assist in the promotion and protection of human rights. It hopes to pursue opportunities for dialogue and interaction between the churches in Australia and East Timor and encourage responses to the pastoral needs and aspirations of the East Timorese community in Australia.

CISET is sponsored by, and based at, UNIYA, a Christian Centre for Social Research and Action. Information, ideas and queries can be made by contacting the CISET desk at UNIYA.

TEL: (02) 356 3888
FAX: (02) 356 3021

or write to CISET
C/- UNIYA
24 Roslyn Street
King's Cross 2011.

Front cover: Photo of Cross in Santa Cruz Cemetry, Dili, East Timor by Frank Brennan SJ
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GLOSSARY

ABRI	The Indonesian Armed Forces
ACBC	Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference
ALP	Australian Labor Party (Political party that formed the Australian federal government 1972-1975 and 1982 onwards)
CCJP	the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace - Australia
CCJPD	Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development -Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands
CIIR	Catholic Institute for International Relations is based in London
CISET	Christians in Solidarity with East Timor
Fretelin	Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
KWI	Catholic Bishops conference of Indonesia
Maubere	Indigenous name for Timor
Pancasila	This is the defining document of the Indonesian State. There are five principles that make up this definition of the Indonesian state.
PNG	Papua New Guinea
UDT	United Democratic Timorese movement
UN	United Nations

INTRODUCTION

Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, visited Australia during November and December of 1993. It was the first time that Bishop Belo had visited Australia. The visit bought home to many Australians the significant role that the Church plays in East Timor. What is that role and why has the Catholic Church taken it on? This question was often asked during the Bishop's visit. We hope that this collection of Church interventions may give some insight into that role and the hope that the Church has for East Timor.

Bishop Belo has been a most significant leader in East Timor since 1983. When so many voices have been silenced through imprisonment, exile or death Carlos Belo has been able to offer another vision. His leadership is marked by a sensitive pastoral style that is not afraid to question Indonesia's occupation of East Timor and confront the abuse of human dignity. It is the Bishop's pastoral experience that gives such power to his demands that the persecution of the East Timorese people be stopped and that political freedom be granted to East Timor.

Eighteen years after Indonesia occupied East Timor, the Church is still a constant voice advocating on behalf of the East Timorese people. Bishop Belo's approach has been a model for many Church agencies throughout the world. The following selection of documents shows how inspirational his leadership has been for Timor. In fact the Church in East Timor has grown in size from less than 30% of the population in 1975 to more than 80% of the population today. The Church is the only institution within East Timor able to voice the aspirations of the Timorese people to obtain a peaceful resolution to the conflict within their homeland. It has called upon the United Nations and Indonesia to protect East Timor's cultural identity and land.

This collection of selected documents highlights that East Timor is not just the concern of a fringe group. East Timor and the human rights of the East Timorese people are advocated through Catholic Church agencies in England, Canada, Japan, the United States and through to Tonga and the Solomon Islands. This is an international movement for justice. It is the call for justice to be granted to a country that has been systematically attacked through the deaths of an estimated 200,000 people and a policy of systematic Indonesianisation.

In these documents the voices of reason, freedom, peace, sorrow and justice are gathered together in order to give hope to the people of East Timor. We know that this hope is infectious and desire that all Christian people will join the call and work for justice, peace and the development of the human spirit.

It must be remebered that even with the voices raised around the world over the last eighteen years, the conflict continnues in East Timor. Despite the lack of international will and the persistent suffering of the people, the East Timorese continnue to uphold their right to dignity, justice and self-determination. Their spirit of hope demands of us a change of heart and attitude. That heart must burn with a desire for the end to the conflict and the realisation of a society that allows its people to live and develop their culture in freedom.

Jack de Groot
7th December, 1993.

CHAPTER ONE

The Current Situation

It is now eighteen years since Indonesia invaded the Portuguese colony of East Timor, subsequently declaring it the twenty-seventh province. Although strong resolutions were passed by the United Nations in the late seventies and early eighties, East Timor remains an unresolved international dispute. The United Nations continues to recognise Portugal as the administering power and has hosted talks between Portugal and Indonesia to resolve the dispute. To date these meetings have been largely ineffectual.

The Indonesian military effectively continue to rule East Timor. There are continuing reports of arbitrary arrests, detentions, torture and killings. There is no freedom of speech or association. The world saw the brutal response of the military to the unarmed demonstrators who gathered at the Santa Cruz cemetery on November 12th, 1991. It should be noted that of the hundreds who were killed or 'disappeared' there are many whose families have yet to find out what happened to them.

Despite protests voiced worldwide, little has changed in the lives of the East Timorese and the majority remain unreconciled to Indonesian rule. Since the massacre, a new Governor and military commander who advocate a hard-line approach to any dissent have been appointed. The armed resistance was dealt a heavy blow in 1992 when its leader Xanana Gusmao was captured but 'silent' resistance is widespread throughout the towns and villages.

Indigenous culture and language have been eroded since the imposition of Indonesian language, education and administration. Indonesian sources point to the increase in schools, health clinics, improved roads and infrastructure. But in their struggle to preserve their culture and lifestyle, the East Timorese are reluctant to speak Indonesian and espouse the principles of *Pancasila.* Many regard Indonesian health services with suspicion and will not consult with foreign doctors whose language and practices they do not understand. Preventable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and diarrhoea, all too often lead to premature death. Business and commerce are dominated by Indonesians from other islands, which further alienates the Timorese.

Although East Timor is a close neighbour to Australia and other countries, it continues to be isolated. A closed territory until 1989, access continues to be restricted. The Catholic Church in East Timor, which has strongly identified with the aspirations of the people and frequently spoken out on their behalf, continues to grow with over 80% of East Timorese now Catholic. That Indonesian integration is unacceptable to the people is most poignantly seen in the struggle of the East Timorese youth who have lived most of their lives under Indonesian rule. They continue to reject and demand the basic human rights that are absent in their lives.

In an interview with *Timor Link*[1] in September, 1993 BISHOP CARLOS BELO, the apostolic administrator, spoke frankly about the current situation in East Timor and of his continued belief that a referendum, consulting the East Timorese about their future, is the only way forward.

What is your opinion of the negotiations or quasi-talks which are being mooted at the moment between Lopez de Cruz and Abilio Araujo?[2]

I don't agree with this kind of move since it doesn't include all Timorese, concretely Ramos Horta (the resistance spokesman) and his colleagues. It should be open to all people, all Timorese, not just Lopez de Cruz; it should involve the people who live in East Timor, those who suffer, and those in Australia and Portugal, as well as Fretelin. I hear that Abilio Araujo is already expelled from the party.

---

[1] *Timor Link* is published by the Catholic Institute for International Relations in England.

[2] Lopez de Cruz is an East Timorese who works for Indonesia and heads UDT Abilio Araujo is a former member of Fretilin.

If they ask me to become an intermediary I must have an official invitation, maybe a letter from the Portuguese government or the Indonesian government and from the Holy See, in order to act.

What about the U.N.?

Also from the U.N.

A few months ago you gave an interview to the monthly, **Matra** *in which you spoke of integration no longer being the basic problem. Can I clarify that you still...*

Yes, for me, the best way to reach a peaceful and honourable solution is still the idea of a referendum. You live in a democratic country. Here we would also like to do so and this is the only way ... to ask the people if they would like to become Indonesian, Portuguese or independent. It is the idea of the people.

But living here I see that day by day we are losing the possibility of saving our selves or of being saved. I am now suggesting the idea of a kind of status, a special status, autonomy for East Timor, to save the cultural identity and the religious identity, in the economical and financial field, maybe, because we are not prepared...

Do you see this an interim measure?

Yes, we are not prepared, we have no men, we have no infrastructure. Maybe linked with Indonesia, but some kind of autonomy, to feel that we really are the owners of this land, not second class citizens in our own homeland.

And do you see this as fitting in with the framework of the peace plan suggested by Ramos Horta where there is a period of semi-autonomy?

Up to now I do not have a copy of Ramos Horta's proposal, I haven't received it yet. I don't know what has happened abroad, but living here, seeing the possibilities, looking at how to work out a*modus vivendi,* to me it would seem better for us, without renouncing the idea of the universal principle of consulting the people through a referendum, to fight for a kind of autonomy, at least at the social and cultural level.

What is your impression of the diplomatic progress this year, especially bearing in mind the shift in American opinion...

This is a good thing, a good initiative, it is good to continue to develop and implement it, and it is important to have a good lobby in the United States, in New York and Washington about East Timor, but it is also important to do something here. Yesterday, and again on Sunday when the three congressional aides were here, there was a small group which wanted to demonstrate and to talk about human rights abuses; they were taken and then yesterday they beat them and tortured them...

How many were involved?

About 100 - I have a list. There are 66 written down. So I think it is better to do two things at the same time, both at the political and diplomatic level abroad, in the United States, Canada, Europe, and here in terms of how to pressure the Indonesian government to respect and to enter into direct dialogue with the population. But my impression is that they fear the people, they are afraid of young people. So only by military means, by force, can they suppress the real desires of the people.

How do you think the Indonesians are feeling in the light of the resolution at the UN Human Rights Commission this year?

I would like to see the issue of human rights discussed as global human rights, but also the human rights of self-determination. We try to pass over this important and fundamental issue, human rights. There really are abuses of human rights; people are beaten, they are not allowed the possibility to speak differently, to hold a different opinion, but also the fundamental right to express what they would like to be politically.

What do you know about the prison conditions of Xanana Gusmao, and another prisoner, Saturnino da Costa Belo, who you were are also very concerned about?

I don't have news, I don't know. About Xanana I heard only that he was transferred to Semarang in East Central Java to a good, "high quality prison", and I hear through the provincial of the Jesuit Fathers, because this prison is in the Jesuit area, in their parish. But about Saturnino, I don't know anything.

We understand that in addition to the youths that were demonstrating on Sunday, many youths had been rounded up...

Yes someone told me around 600, but we have a list of 74 names. They have been taken to different military detention centres. I have not yet heard that they have been released.

From spending two days in a Timorese parish, it was my impression that it was very difficult for the parishioners even to discuss their faith in God with each other because the meetings are disallowed by the military. I was wondering how the Timorese people can express their faith?

There are many ways, their presence in the Church, in the Eucharist, in the chapels. They also pray in their own homes, the rosary, they organise processions with a statue of the virgin which they carry from house to house. This is allowed. Other kinds of group meetings, to sit down together to read the Bible and to pray are not allowed because the military doesn't trust them. They think that they will discuss politics - this is not allowed. But really, the Catholic faith of the people is a kind of symbol to unite them, it is a way of expressing the fact that they are Timorese. They don't like any other religion, they don't like Indonesia.

Have you tried complaining to the military about this lack of freedom for church activities? What is their reply?
They say that they don't beat anyone, they respect the people, that they work for the prosperity of the people. But for me it is a pure lie. From 1983 till now. I hear only lies from them.

I would have thought from the doctrine of Pancasila that people are free to worship.
That is the theory. But in practice it is very difficult because they are intent on Islamisation. I hear yesterday that about 400 boys were taken to Java to attend Islamic centres of studies like minor seminaries. The theory is all very well, but in practice is different.

And what about this large statue of Christ which has been donated to Catholics here by Garuda Airlines?
This is the idea of our governor. He has many ideas. They start with the religious aspect and the political aspect. So it will have 27 steps for the 27 provinces, some kind of Garuda motif, the rules of Pancasila and the ten commandments, and will be inaugurated on 17 July, the day of integration, next year. The governor will oblige the people to come to the ceremony and they will probably ask me to celebrate the mass.

And you will have to do it?
I don't have to, I have the right to avoid or not to avoid. I will see first...

What message would you like to give to readers of Timor Link, and all those who have a deep concern for East Timor, and who want to campaign?
To lobby more, with politicians, to keep the issue alive at the political level, as well as at the social and economic level, anything you can do to help the young generation to get scholarships for their studies and so on would be welcome.

* * *

This succession of letters from a Church source within East Timor to a friend outside East Timor catalogues a summer of oppression during 1993. These extracts are taken from the English journal *Timor Link* of October, 1993.

10 July 1993
"I have known various parishes... they (the military) are capturing young people for interrogation...but not only for interrogation. The military also give them beatings and apply torture. I was informed that they have captured more than 70 youths in Lautem and 120 in Baucau. Therefore, you see that the persecution of young people in East Timor does not stop..."

6 August 1993
"The Indonesian military continue to kill civilians on 5 August at about 7.00 pm, two village heads of Waigre, Vemasse (area of Baucau) were shot dead by Red Beret Indonesian soldiers. The dead men were Armanso and Vicente. Armanso was killed with three shots and Vicente with seven shots. After having killed the men the Indonesian soldiers buried them in a hidden place. It was only on 7 August that the families were able to get the bodies..."

5 September 1993
"The situation is the same. Always the same environment of terror. An example; before the visit of the congressional staff, the Indonesians demonstrated their military power by rigidly patrolling the city of Dili and its surroundings. Some youths who had barely been freed from prison were taken away in five military trucks and spread amongst various military units. On Sundays, the churches of Dili are guarded by well-armed Indonesian troops because they fear demonstrations. What I see is that Indonesia is afraid of the young people, it is afraid of the East Timorese population. As long as there is not a reduction in military forces or reduction of military occupation and dictatorship...

"The Indonesians have been able to make the faithful afraid to talk with their bishop. On 1-2 September I was in the parishes of Maliana and Bobonaro and the Christians of the village of Saborai were not allowed by the military to participate in the church services. When the Apostolic Nuncio visited Bobonaro on 23 July, the students of the school of agriculture did not come to Church services because the military commander prohibited them and some families to attend mass. So much fear has been created among Christians, that Catholics are now afraid to approach the bishop and priests.

"The young people are constantly under surveillance, they are tense and I believe that one day the whole thing might explode."

8 September 1993

"I would like to tell you a bit about what happened here in my residence in Lecidere on 5 September. The visit of three congressional staff members was planned for this day. Early in the morning the Indonesian military took measures to avert any type of demonstration by the young people. At around 6.00 am we celebrated mass on the patio of my residence, because the number of faithful present was very high and the chapel was too small. This mass was attended by a large number of people, because there were many young people. After mass some of them went into hiding in the rooms, bathrooms and kitchen to wait for the right time to demonstrate in front of the congressional staff. There were about 100 young people. During the day more of them arrived. Most of them left after I asked them to do so. However, one group managed to remain hidden in the bathrooms. At 5.00 pm I myself escorted them to the door of the residence. The problem was that the house was surrounded by military, police, police informers, altogether about 200 people. After a lot of discussion with the young people I decided to take them personally in a truck and drop them off near their homes. That way there was no demonstration. But when the young people were in front of the door of my residence (about 50 of them) they were filmed by Indonesian intelligence. The next day, 6 September, soldiers captured all these young people and took them to their headquarters; they had not even demonstrated before the congressional staff but were barbarously beaten and tortured.

"Please pray for me, because now I have to confront two sides; Indonesia and the youth (people of East Timor)...The (Indonesian) soldiers continue to accuse me of promoting demonstrations and the young people accuse me of having sold out to Indonesia, because I do not allow them to have a demonstration at my residence..."

16 September 1993

"Yesterday I returned from my pastoral visit to Turiscai, Maubisse, Aunaro and Aileu. I went to Turiscai to set up a new parish...In these places I heard many complaints of the population; the people are under constant surveillance. In the region of Alas, Fatuberliu, people may not venture beyond two kilometres from their vegetable gardens; the Indonesians are settling more families from Java as transmigrants in Alas and Natarbora; in all the places I passed through I saw many Indonesian military control posts. At these control points they search everything, including wallets, briefcases, suitcases. On 5 September, they beat a young man until he almost died. In Dili at the Komando headquarters in Colmera they continue to torture young people with electric shocks.

"As you see, we are living in an environment of terror and pressure. The Indonesians are saying that they have already withdrawn battalions from East Timor, but this is not true. On the contrary, they are increasing the presence of military units in all places. I would like you to know that the following battalions are in East Timor:

"Batalyon Tempur", a combat battalion to fight Fretilin.

"Batalyon Territorial", according to the Indonesians, this battalion is dedicated to development. But all it is doing is spying on people and beating them.

"Kodim" which consists of those soldiers who are in the counties, administrative centres and villages for military and social services, for control and intelligence-gathering.

"745" and "744" are special units consisting of Timorese and Indonesians whose task is to penetrate the bush and fight the guerrillas.

Police who are to be found everywhere.

Security troops "Hanship" and "Ratih". These consist of East Timorese civilians who are trained to collaborate and be the servants of the military.

Battalions of commandos, "Red Berets" known here in East Timor as "Nanggala". These are the worst, their task is to spy, capture and torture.

"That is why when the Indonesians say that they have already reduced their troops and withdrawn their fighting battalion "Batalyon Tempur", it is necessary to analyse Indonesian tactics well...

"The Indonesians are now fomenting a campaign against me, saying in all counties of East Timor that I organised the demonstration of 5 September at the time of the visit of the congressional staff (no demonstration even took place then) and that I hid those participating in the demonstration. This is a campaign to discredit me among Catholics in order to keep the faithful away from the churches. This is like a communist regime which needs to be dismantled through increased pressure from Washington.

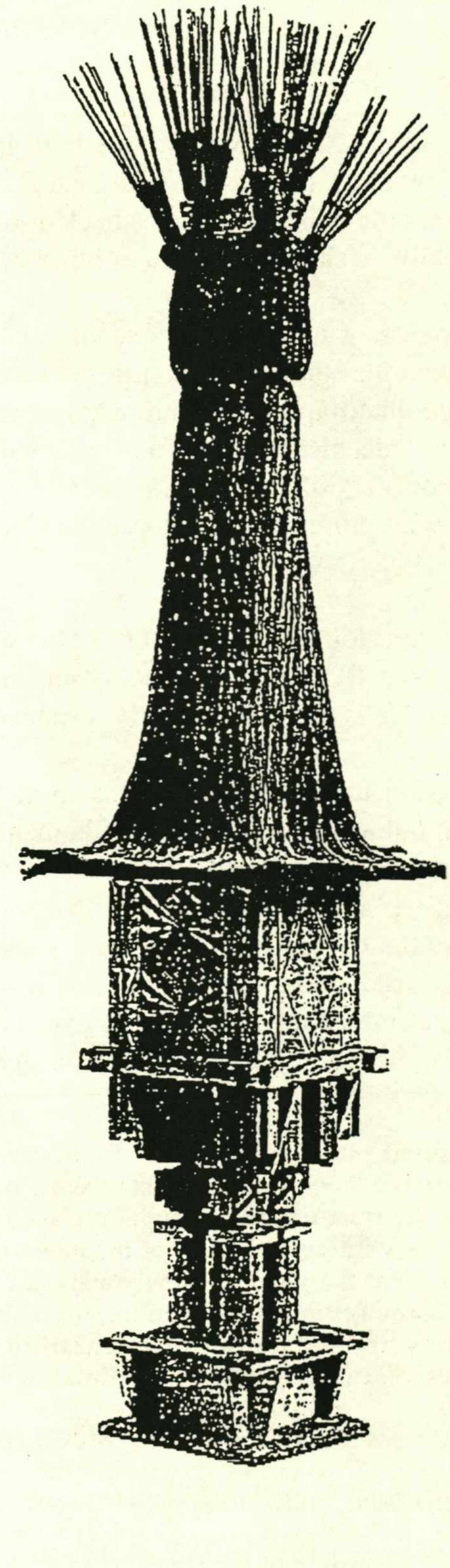
This statement from the US Catholic Conference dated September 1993, quotes Bishop Belo on East Timor and the current situation which is still dominated by terror and harassment.

BACKGROUND: Nearly two years after Indonesian soldiers opened fire on hundreds of peaceful marchers in Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, East Timor, killing from 150 to 250 innocent people, harsh repression continues in this Indonesian-occupied territory. In a communication in September 1993, Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo of Dili said dozens of young people who had tried to hold a demonstration (but had not actually done so) during the early September visit of a staff delegation from the US House of Representatives "were barbarously beaten and tortured". Bishop Belo concluded: "I ask you... to contact members of Congress so that they will continue to pressure Indonesia to withdraw its troops from East Timor and give more freedom to the people...As you can see, we are living in an environment of terror and pressure".

The Clinton Administration has taken some steps to address the situation in East Timor, the largely Catholic former Portuguese colony whose population has been decimated since the Indonesian invasion in 1975. In July, during the G-7 meeting in Tokyo, President Clinton raised the issue of human rights in East Timor with Indonesian President Suharto. In September, Secretary of State Christopher provided US encouragement for the UN-sponsored discussions between Indonesia and Portugal concerning the political status of East Timor.

USCC POSITION: On several occasions, the Conference has denounced Indonesian human rights violations in East Timor, supported a cut-off of US military training for Indonesia, and urged continuation of the UN discussions, which the Holy See has also encouraged.

ACTION REQUESTED: Around November 19-20, President Clinton and other high-level US officials will meet with Indonesian President Suharto during the Asia Pacific Economic Conference summit in Seattle, Washington. A Senate letter, initiated by Senators Pell, Feingold and Durenberger to President Clinton is presently circulating in the US Senate, urging him to press US concern over human rights abuses, an end to harassment of East Timor's Catholic Church, and the need for steps that might lead to reconciliation and a peaceful UN-sponsored settlement of the East Timor conflict. A similar letter, initiated by Representatives Hall, Machtley, Lantos and Porter, is also circulating in the House.



CHAPTER TWO

BISHOP BELO - A GLIMPSE

Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo was born in Waiiakama, a village in Vemasse, Baucau on the 3rd February, 1948. He was the fifth of six children and his father, a school teacher, died when he was two years old. His family had a background in farming and in his childhood the young Belo developed skills in shepherding water buffaloes in Kelkell, the village of his ancestors.

Belo was sent to missionary school and after graduating from the minor seminary in Dare, he continued his studies for the priesthood in Portugal and Rome. He was ordained a priest in 1980 and appointed apostolic administrator of the diocese of Dili in 1983. At the age of 40 he was consecrated a bishop. It was a major event, attended by numerous government and church officials and some 30,000 Timorese Catholics. As the leader of the Catholic Church in East Timor, he pushed ahead with programs to increase the Church's institutional resources, including new schools and churches.

As the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, Bishop Belo is not affiliated with the Indonesian Bishops Conference (KWI), as the Indonesian integration of East Timor is still disputed by the United Nations. He is therefore directly responsible to the Vatican.

Witnessing the continued repression and suffering of his people, Bishop Belo has increasingly spoken out against the abuses of human rights and lack of freedom. No doubt influenced by his Salesian background, the Bishop has a special affinity with Timorese youth and understands their frustrations and restlessness. His own home has often been a sanctuary for them. In 1989 he sent a letter to the United Nations Secretary General asking for a popular referendum to settle the question of East Timor. As head of the Catholic church which has grown rapidly since 1975, Bishop Belo and members of the Church suffer isolation and harassment. Though poor in material resources, the East Timorese Church is alive and rich in faith.

This edited interview from the *Asia Focus* [3] of 20th August 1988, was conducted with Bishop Belo at the time of his Episcopal ordination. It gives a very interesting view of the new Bishop. He speaks of the need for newly arrived Catholics to learn Tetum. This is an important signal of Belo's understanding of integration with Indonesia (see next article). The interview was called:
'I was Afraid to Assume the Role of Bishop'

What does being titular bishop mean for you and for Dili?
I am not the bishop of the Diocese of Dili, but remain apostolic administrator. But now my apostolic authority is strengthened through episcopal consecration. An apostolic administrator can be a priest without episcopal consecration or a titular bishop. In the latter case, he gets a "titulum" - or title - from another diocese. In my case, it is from Lorium diocese.

Why was a bishop not named for Dili?
The major factor is politics as regards East Timor. The East Timor issue is still being disputed at the United Nations, and the Vatican is carefully observing the process toward a final political solution.

What was your reaction to being made a titular bishop?
I was very surprised and I told the pronuncio that I was afraid to hold episcopal office. As apostolic administrator, I have had so many difficult problems that I was afraid to assume the responsibility of a bishop. I asked him to seek another person for the job, but he encouraged me to accept. After a while, I told him I would accept if the Pope really wants me. As a Salesian, I regard the pope's will as an order which I must obey.

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[3] *Asia Focus* is published by UCA News of Hong Kong and Thailand.

What has been developing in Dili diocese during the past five years?
In 1983, there were about 280,000 Catholics in the diocese, now there are 540,000. This is due mainly to large-scale conversions of former adherents of local mysticism. Divine works play the major role in such conversions, but sociological and pastoral factors have also helped. It is the fruit of the hard work of priests, Religious brothers and sisters, lay catechists and many other Church activists. Also, the opening of new settlement areas with good transportation to rural areas helps bridge the mystic adherents to Catholic parish centres throughout East Timor. Last but not least, the promotion of Pancasila (the five principles, Indonesia's state ideology), which appeals to local mystic adherents to convert to one of the five recognized religions in the country, is quite instrumental in their conversion to Catholicism.

Besides Catholicism, they can choose Islam — Indonesia's top religion — Buddhism, Hinduism or Protestantism, so why do they prefer Catholism?
They find that there are many similarities between Catholic rituals and their former mystic rituals. Such awareness enables us to dialogue with them during their preparation for Baptism. The East Timorese also have a strong feeling of their common identity. They regard it as their duty to defend this society - united in tradition and religion as well as in their way of life.

What about lay Church involvement?
I am happy with the growing participation of the laity in Church life, especially catechists and religion teachers.
Last year, we held the first lay Catholic congress, aimed at developing the lay apostolate. The initiative to hold the congress came from the laity signifying their growing awareness and desire to get more involved in Church life. We assured the lay participants that the Church belongs to all of us. It now depends on the diocesan secretariat for the lay apostolate to improve the existing awareness. It is they who should contribute thoughts and ideas to train lay Catholics throughout the diocese.

What are you doing about seminary training for Dili diocese?
Because the education of priests is at the heart of the diocese, I give this full attention. We plan to establish another minor seminary at Bekora, just outside Dili. We have the location, but construction has been held up due to financial problems. At present, there are 60 students at Lahane Minor Seminary. Another 70 students will be admitted this year. Lay Catholics now realize the importance of seminary education. We hope and pray that local lay Catholics will contribute toward the construction of the new seminary.

Is there some kind of split between Indonesian-speaking Catholics and East Timor's native Tetum-speakers?
Language should not divide us. The Gospel must be proclaimed in a way that is well-perceived by the people. It's a matter of inculturation. As Tetum is the language of the majority in East Timor, its use in the liturgy must be accepted. Newly arrived Catholics should try to master the Tetun language to integrate with the native Catholics. True integration requires that there be a sharing of cultures, including language. But if most of a congregation speaks Indonesian, then the liturgy should be in Indonesian. Flexibility is required regarding the use of languages.

Do you expect to become a member of the Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (KWI) in the near future?
If in the near future, the Vatican and local Catholics want it, certainly we would join the KWI as a full member. But till now, Dili diocese has not been looking forward to union with the KWI.

How do you deal with the shortage of priests in Dili diocese?
Through pastoral visits, I always try to maintain close contacts with lay Catholics, especially the youth, to promote vocations to the priesthood and Religious life. I also seek cooperation with other dioceses in the country, but they unfortunately also have a shortage, so they too are unable to help provide priests for Dili. But last year, I was invited to Jakarta and there I received good news from eight Religious congregations who would like to serve the East Timor Church.

This further article from *Asia Focus* tells of comments that Bishop Belo made to the press at the time of his ordination.

The apostolic administrator of Dili diocese has disclosed that he does not oppose East Timor officially becoming part of Indonesia.
Since 1976, Indonesia has claimed East Timor to be its 27th province, but the United Nations does not recognize the claim, nor does the Holy See which still keeps Dili diocese, covering all East Timor, under its direct authority.
"I am willing to cooperate with all concerned in developing the East Timor region as part of Indonesian territory," Salesian Monsignor Carlos Filipe Ximenese Belo said soon after he was ordained titular bishop of Lorium, Italy.
His ordination took place at Our Lady's Statue Park of Lecidere in front of the bishop's residence in Dili on June 19.
Archbishop Francesco Canalini, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to Indonesia, was the main ordaining prelate during the four-hour ordination liturgy. Assisting him were Carmelite Bishop Francis Xavier

Hadisumarta, newly-appointed Bishop of Sorong-Manokwari and president of the Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (KWI), and Divine Word Archbishop Donatus Djagom of Ende, Flores. About 30,000 Catholics from the diocese attended, as did East Timor Governor Mario Viegas Carrascalao and other Indonesian civilian and military officials, KWI secretary Bishop Paschalis Hardjosoemarta of Purwokerto, and six bishops from Indonesia's Nusa Tenggara province.

In a ceremony broadcast throughout Indonesia by state television, Bishop Belo said that East Timor's Catholic Church has been involved in national development not just to promote the welfare of society, but also to witness to the spiritual dimensions of development.

Born Feb.3, 1948, at Waikama village in Baukau regency, 130 kilometres east of East Timor's capital, Bishop Belo is the first native Timorese to head the Catholic Church in Dili since Portugal first ruled there about 500 years ago.

Weeks before the ceremony, Archbishop Canalini has told UCA News here that Monsignor Belo's ordination would benefit the Church in East Timor. "By being elevated a bishop, Father Belo can exercise his duties more officially and take fuller care of people in Dili," he said.

Father Valentinus Kartasiswaya, KWI prosecretary, commented that "Monsignor Belo's elevation shows that Rome is attentive to the needs of the local Church of East Timor." Father Kartasiswaya also said the newly ordained bishop can join KWI. "It is only a matter of time," he observed. "The head of Dili diocese has always taken part (as an observer) in KWI's annual meetings."

East Timor today has some 540,000 Catholics - nearly three times as many as there were in 1975 when Indonesia sent troops into the once Portuguese colony.

Bishop Belo's letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 6th February 1989, was an explicit request for a new direction for East Timor. The letter gave Bishop Belo a leadership role in Timor that differed from that offered by the Resistance.

His Excellency
J. Perez de Cuellar
U.N. Secretary-General

Please accept my sincere compliments of respect.

I am writing to your Excellency to bring to your attention that the process of decolonisation in Portuguese Timor has not been resolved by the United Nations and should not be allowed to be forgotten. We, the people of Timor, believe that we should be consulted about the future of our land.

As the person responsible for the Catholic Church and as a citizen of Timor I hereby request your Excellency to initiate a genuine and democratic process of decolonisation in East Timor to be realised through a referendum. The people of Timor ought to be heard through a plebiscite on their future. Until now they have not been consulted. Others have spoken in their name. It is Indonesia which says that the People of East Timor have chosen integration but the people themselves have never said this. Portugal hopes that time will resolve the problem. But in the meantime we are dying as a people and as a nation.

Your Excellency, you are a democrat and a friend of human rights. I ask you to demonstrate by deeds respect for both the spirit and the letter of the UN Charter which gives to all peoples the right to decide their own destiny, freely, consciously and responsibly. Excellency, there is no better democratic way of knowing the supreme wishes of the Timorese people than by the conduct of a REFERENDUM promoted by the UN for the people of Timor.

Thank you for all your sympathy for the People of Timor.

In this letter to the Vatican's Ambassador to Indonesia, Bishop Belo affirms his call for a referendum for East Timor. His letter outlines the continued abuses occurring in East Timor and the activities of some resistance groups.

My sincerest greetings of respect.

I am responding to your letter of 1 February 1989 in which you requested an exhaustive report on the Santo Antonio Foundation. In my Pastoral Note of 5 December I have already explained some aspects of this Foundation.

First of all, the so-called Santo Antonio Foundation, is not a Foundation properly speaking because to be a Foundation in Indonesia an organisation must have recognised office bearers and a constitution approved by a Notary. But the SA Foundation is a secret organisation and its activities are secret.

Its founder is a certain ANANIAS DO CARMO, a native of Oecussi, a teacher at the Balide-Dili Catholic primary school. I am told that when he was 7 years old he disappeared and reappeared when he was 9. Since then he has never been sick or injured. His body has special powers and bullets cannot penetrate it.

He started organising meetings of sympathisers, involving 'teachers', 'students' and 'officials', to defend the Catholic religion against Islam and Protestantism. They hold special devotions to St Anthony; they say the rosary before a candle-lit altar and pray for cures for the sick. As a sign of membership they have a cross tattooed on their hand or arm. Their activities have spread through the schools from Dili to Lospalos, since the start of the organisation in 1984.

In parallel there is another guerilla organisation called the 'Clandestine Party', more concerned with political theory and made up of Timorese critical of the Indonesian occupation. Among the leaders is one AFONSO PINTO, known as LAFAIK. Some members are Timorese soldiers, police, civil servants and students. The objective of this organisation according to LAFAIK is to combat 'corruption'. At the end of 1987 this organisation was uncovered and in 1988, LAFAIK was sent to Viqueque to fight the Fretilin guerillas.

Sometime in 1988 these two organisations were amalgamated for the purpose of killing President Suharto when he visited East Timor. Because of disagreements between the members in Watolari over certain matters, there were mutual denunciations and the organisation was uncovered by the military. There was a series of arrests and interrogations (of men, women and students). Women and young girls were abused. Men were bashed, punched and kicked. These events provoked a reaction by the people and the Church took a position through the Pastoral Note of 5th December 1988.

At this moment the situation is calm. Some of the leaders are still detained. Will they be tried? I don't know.

We still do not know if the Foundation was established solely by the Timorese or whether hidden forces are at work. The worst thing would be if this round of imprisonment and interrogation were carried out by officials seeking rewards from Suharto!

Specific cases of recent human rights abuses:

1. The Indonesian invasion and military occupation of Timor has denied the possibility of the Timorese people to express their feelings and this, per se, is an abuse of human rights contrary to the UN Charter.

2. Prohibition of speech about political matters, prohibition of association, meetings and movement at night: these are facts of everyday life. Prohibition of talking about independence, autonomy and a referendum. Everyone is obliged to speak about the Pancasila and Development. In the religious domain there are no rights for the non-religious, atheists, and animists. Everyone must choose a religion.

The above points 1 & 2 are much more serious than ordinary abuses such as:

3. In Dilor-Lacluta, members of the 726 Battalion
  A. killed
    1. Carlos Mendes da Silva, 22, on 31 October 1988, using 18 bullets;
    2. Luis da Cruz, 20, also with 18bullets.
    They were executed in public before 15 people. (I have their names).
  B. Civilians who have been beaten
    1. Araujo Fernandes from Ahio-Dilor
    2. Agostinho Lo'o from Ahio-Dilor
    3. Francisco Parada Martins from Ahio-Dilor
    4. Luis Ximenes from Ahio-Dilor
    5. Loi'Ouela-ficoi whose head was fractured
    6. Alarico Martins from Ahio-Dilor
    7. Moises Ximenes from Ahio-Dilor

On November 5, 1988, the Commander of the Sector sent Afonso Lafaik to tell the people the killings were done by Fretilin. Again on the 7th, officials from Viqueque were sent to Lacluta to tell the people that the killings were the actions of Fretilin.

4.More people were killed by the military in Ossie(4), Laclutas(5), Viqueque(2), Garuvai-Baucau(2), Luro(1). These killings were carried out in the name of security.

5.Psychological pressure has been placed on public servants not to reveal these killings lest they lose their jobs or themselves be killed by the military. These sorts of killings have been going on since 1976.

Since 1983, the year I was appointed Apostolic Administrator, we have every year witnessed the same abuses. We have spoken to the authorities, but to no effect. The People are the ones who suffer. Therefore an urgent referendum is needed to ask the People of Timor if they accept integration. In Timor we live under the psychological pressure of Dictatorship. Finally it should be noted that the military have trained and paid ex-Santo Antonio prisoners to spy on the priests in the parishes. One can only ask when will human rights abuses in East Timor cease.

This edited interview with Bishop Belo was first printed in a Jakarta monthly *Matra* (August 1992). In this interview Bishop Belo talks about the realities of East Timor and its place in Indonesia. He talks of independence for East Timor so that it can celebrate its culture. The nuances of Bishop Belo's replies are extremely significant. He also talks strongly of the surveillance he experiences.

What's wrong, in your opinion?
The people of East Timor must be able to live in an atmosphere where they feel they have a place, that they are human beings, that they are being given attention; they must be given the freedom to be complete human beings. These conditions can be achieved if physical and material development are accompanied by human development. That's what is not yet happening here.

Human development? What do you mean?
People should have the freedom to move, the freedom to think, the freedom to express their opinions. The freedom to say that there are things they don't like. There is no such democracy yet. We have to start teaching democracy at the lowest level, at primary school.

If people live in a democracy they will happily get involved in working for progress. The important thing now is to give them the key, to become involved. What I have noticed recently is that people have closed up more than ever. They have become more and more closed ... apathetic. People at the top say everything's OK, everything's alright, and the people answer in unison, saying yes, everything's alright, everything's OK.

Do you think that the security forces are dealing correctly with groups that don't yet support integration?
I don't want to teach others about *Pancasila* but I think that we should get back to *Pancasila* and especially the principles of justice and humanity. The interests of the human being stand above the interests of the state and above the interests of security. Those groups should be properly treated. They should be coaxed, encouraged, and so on, before military action is taken.

Hasn't ABRI (the armed forces) begun to conduct a territorial operation to mingle closely with the people?
I see this in two ways. On the one hand, okay, they produce results for the people and I appreciate that. On the other hand, I am deeply afraid because everything is done and built by the military. This could result in the people being even less willing to get involved. 'Why should we bother, why do we have to do things ourselves. Let them get on with it....' The military should withdraw so that the community takes responsibility for progress and for their lives.

How do you think the territorial operations (opster) should be conducted?
I think *opster* should only aim at helping the community. It should not be for the purpose of staying at the side of the community, so as to watch everyone's movements. They should not be there as intel. Let me be quite clear. I hear many complaints. Five kilometres of road is built and there's a ceremony officiated by a minister. Another thing. There are village heads, district chiefs, sub-district chiefs, a local assembly. But often, after they have been chosen, they adopt a bad attitude, act like feudals. There should be no place for a feudal attitude in an era of development. It's not right. It won't happen.

What are you doing to draw those in the upper echelons closer to the idea of giving the people a role?
I do whatever is possible within the office I hold. When I travel to the regions, I speak to people and to their leaders. I also speak to the government and to ABRI. These are my methods. It's rather different. I don't hold public meetings.

Do you not try to encourage dialogue...?
Yes, there should be dialogue. But dialogue must be free. That is essential. There have been dialogues and meetings, but the impression I have is that people only raise things which they think are acceptable. If they raise things that are not likely to be acceptable, those who said such things go home and can't sleep peacefully because they are afraid of being summoned and interrogated.

What have you done to create good relations between the Church and ABRI?
I don't have military forces and I don't want to make any comments. But I want to say that I find it very regrettable that many people believe that I am obstructing development, that I am anti-integration, that I am two-faced, that I encourage the young people to go on demonstrations. I am really unhappy about this. Maybe they have evidence to support their opinion, but if so, why don't they bring it out into the open?

This is very unpleasant. The result is that we live in a state of mutual distrust. This is what makes me very unhappy. In the first place, I am not two-faced. Second, if we all want to restore tranquillity and freedom in East Timor, I think priority should be given to civilians. If possible, our friends in the army should stick to purely military duties.

But ABRI has a dual function.
Yes, and I personally don't understand where the limits between the functions lie. This should be explained. As things are here in East Timor, the military are everywhere, in social affairs, the economy, culture, tourism, social communications. So what is left for civilians? If this is the case, let's just have monofunction! Those who have followed a military calling should stick to military tasks and leave everything else to others.

Do you mean that these differences should be properly recognised?
Yes, in formal juridical terms and in implementation. There should be greater regional autonomy.

When is it right to speak out and when is it right to stay silent?
I speak out when people are in a state of unrest, when they are being oppressed, when they are being treated unjustly and in conflict with *Pancasila.* I speak out because sometimes the situation demands that I should. I don't speak out for the sake of opposition but to help improve things.

And what if the things you say damage your own position?
That's all part of my life's calling. I cannot stand by in silence when something needs to be changed. I must have the courage to take a stand. Sometimes people accuse me of being too strong. If this means my taking positions that are unpopular, so be it. That's the risk. But not everyone is unhappy about this. Those who like what I do say that, because people have no voice and cannot speak out, the bishop must do so. Others don't have the space to speak probably because they are afraid.

Why is it that recently you have not said much?
It's difficult. When I speak, my words are misinterpreted. Newspapers and journals are not neutral when they report what I say. They are biased. They don't consider all sides of the question; only one side is highlighted. What should I say to such journalists or press organs?

Do you think that the Indonesian press is biased?
One would need to make a careful analysis to say that. But it's my impression that the Indonesian press is being manipulated!

Was this especially apparent in the reporting about the 12 November incident?
Since long before that. Many people wrote very biased things without seeking confirmation from me. I have often been very disappointed.

The courts have started passing down verdicts on people charged in connection with the 12 November incident. What, in your opinion, was the cause of that incident?
We need to examine a number of factors in relation to 12 November. Many opinions need to be heard and scrutinised. Those young people had long been complaining that there was no work for them after leaving school. Some said that colonialism is emerging in East Timor. All the teachers are from outside, all the civil servants are from outside. Go into any government office and all the employees are from outside. For the simplest jobs in road-building, they bring in people from outside. And these workers bring their children and their brothers and sisters.

Young people in Dili are seen as being bent on holding demonstrations. Do you, in your day-to-day contact with the community, have the same impression?
It should be carefully investigated. We are often too quick to level accusations. Sometimes, I see among the young people others who are running the show, directors on top of the directors. Another thing that needs to be examined is that certain people know that a movement is in preparation but allow the balloon to get bigger and bigger until it bursts. In actual fact, the aspirations being articulated by the young people here are part of the dynamic of all young people. It happens not only here but also in Jakarta, in Bandung, in Korea, in Palestine. Why is it that in other places, young people can speak up but they must keep silent here?

Some people say that the young people who are accused of holding demonstrations are the products of the education system set up after integration.
Not only that. What is more important is that they

have studied the 1945 Constitution the Preamble of which states that all forms of colonialism must cease everywhere in the world. They have learnt from that. They see the reality in their everyday lives, they see the leaders of society, the people in charge here.

From what you know, are there problems with education here in East Timor?
The most striking progress here has indeed been made in the field of education. There are many schools, even down to the villages. But this is where I hear the most complaints. The progress has only been in quantity, not in the quality of education. I get complaints about teachers who don't turn up, teachers going to meetings, teachers going on tour to all kinds of places in connection with duties that have nothing to do with their pupils.

Speaking about what prompted the 12th November incident, you said just now that there were many factors. Can you mention some of the other factors?
Their most fundamental complaint is that the question of integration has not yet been resolved in a peaceful and democratic way. Integration is already a fact but it must be for us to accept it. It is for us to decide, for us to accept or reject integration. Integration is not something that can be forced. If integration is a fact, we should be treated properly, like citizens in other parts of Indonesia. The young people here complain, saying it's as if East Timor is a region won in battle, a military conquest, not a region integrated in an acceptable way by the motherland. These are the complaints that I hear.

What about Fretilin?
Yes, Fretilin and Xanana Gusmao (the leader of the resistance) still exert some influence. People who still want to follow Xanana believe that the fire of independence should not be extinguished.

But apart from this, one should also take account of the fact that ABRI was unable to control itself during that incident. Another important factor is that many civilians, many East Timorese who were in the lead, were from the intel, spying on their fellow East Timorese. During August, September and October, up to the time of the 12 November outburst, many people were divided into two groups. One was the group of intel agents, while the other consisted of those who were being reported by their agents.

Which group were you in?
I was among those being reported ... ha ... ha ... ha! There were all kinds of reports. That I had held illegal meetings in my home, that I had hidden weapons, that I had sent letters abroad. Every move I made was monitored, my sermons were taped, my letters were censored.

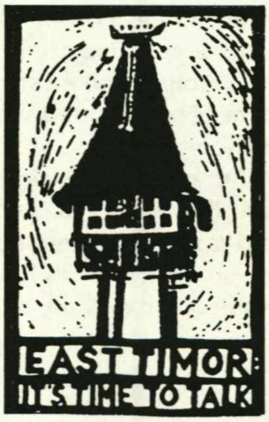
Does the fact that your personal letters have been disseminated mean that there are intel agents inside the church or in your own household?
Yes, it does. After meetings to discuss church affairs, there are often people who report. I know there are people who are under instructions or being paid to listen to everything I say, follow all my statements, get hold of my letters. Take for instance the letter (of 6 February 1989) to the UN Secretary-General about the need to hold a referendum. The day after it was sent, the general public knew all about it. Very strange. They are right inside my circle. The letter had been taken from a place which only people close to me know anything about. We shouldn't be surprised at such things; anything can happen here.

Do you think that what they are doing is wrong?
I don't like it. And it makes me feel that this a police state. Everything I do, all my activities, every word, are followed and monitored ... This is not the Indonesia that aspires to *Pancasila.*

Next year, the MPR (People's Consultative Assembly) will meet. Do you have any special hopes?
Sometimes I ask myself whether this is a republic or a monarchy. Isn't there anyone else in Indonesia who can come forward as a new leader? Maybe there is. But perhaps the system is incapable of producing a new leader. Or it may be that many people have resigned themselves to things as they are or don't want to put themselves forward.

And so?
We in East Timor are a little influenced by western culture. For instance, if a village head has served for four years, it's time for someone new to take over. Replacing people is a normal process.

What are your plans when you stop being the Bishop of Dili?
I want to go abroad to serve other nations, anywhere where I may be needed. Perhaps to China, Africa or Latin America. I want to contribute part of my life to other nations.



CHAPTER THREE

Timor's History Since 1975
Voices from Within and from Outside

Indonesia invaded East Timor with massive force on December 7th, 1975. Many of the people fled to the mountains. The older people still remembered the brutality of the Japanese invasion just over thirty years earlier when an estimated 40,000 East Timorese people died.

The years following the invasion were a dark and traumatic period. As Indonesia consolidated its rule with unrelenting force, East Timor remained a closed and isolated land. Many Timorese joined the armed resistance which controlled large parts of the territory until the late seventies. The continuous military campaigns to destroy all resistance included the forced relocation of people away from their ancestral lands to security camps in less fertile areas controlled by the Indonesian military. Cut off from their livelihood, thousands died from disease and starvation. A 1985 Amnesty International report claimed 200,000 people, a third of the population, had died during the invasion and subsequent years. Some of the military campaigns used East Timorese people as human shields in their advances. Massacres occurred as well such as those at Lacluta and Kraras. Amnesty and other agencies have recorded thousands of human rights abuses, summary executions, disappearances, rape and torture since the Indonesian take-over.

East Timor was formally integrated into the Republic of Indonesia as its 27th province on the 17th July, 1976. Indonesia claims that an Indonesian appointed legislative council requested integration. This ignored the fact that the United Nations did not recognise Indonesian rule, demanded the East Timorese exercise the right of self-determination, and to this day recognises Portugal as the administering power. Since the invasion over 100,000 Indonesians have migrated to East Timor, many as participants of formal transmigration programs.

In this time, another 'killing' has been occurring - the killing of traditional culture, language and beliefs. The speaking of Portuguese, Tetum or another of the local dialects is discouraged and Indonesian is taught in all schools, it is the language of business and commerce. Traditional Timorese craft struggles to survive and many of the people skilled in such craft have been killed.

At almost every opportunity for international attention, East Timorese people have been determined to show the world they have not accepted Indonesian rule.

Virtually no government denies that Indonesia's occupation of East Timor is illegal and most consider that Indonesian rule has been characterised by serious and consistent abuses.

VOICES WITHIN

This document was prepared by the Religious of East Timor for presentation at the Conference of Indonesian Major Religious Superiors in 1981. The statement as it appears here is taken from an edited version which was printed in the June newsletters of the Timor Information Service and the Asian Bureau Australia.

We do not intend giving an analysis of the East Timor problem, but only to reflect together on the faith of the East Timorese people in the actual situation. We realise that by simply analysing the problem, we would not be speaking from heart to heart, our communications would still be shallow, and there might easily be misunderstandings which were not desired or which give the impression that we are always complaining or begging. It is true that the East Timorese Church has many needs which cannot be fulfilled even by the Indonesian Church.

We recognise that a sincere communication demands a long process because, despite many similarities of community and faith, we have very different backgrounds. We hope our communication will be successful, based on deep reflections from us all, both in our own groups, and as a group together.... Our cooperation...will become a positive contribution to the Indonesian religious as well as to the religious of East Timor though there are differences in the history of the Church and its government.

We must all realise that the Indonesian National Army which liberated Indonesia from the colonial power in an astonishing manner will never liberate the people of East Timor from their colonial situation towards autonomy and national independence because our situation and reality are very different.

What has taken place during these five years is mostly invasion, war, looting, the destruction of the indigenous population, territorial subjection, colonial exploitation, the expulsion of the indigenous population who are replaced by people from other islands, military occupation and attempts at mass mobilizations of people (from 12 to 55 years) to make war on each other. In fact the wish and desire of the East Timorese people from the beginning has been the right to determine their own fate, and not mass murders such as have been done by their neighbours.

SITUATION AND EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE PEOPLE

The people of East Timor are suffering. They feel themselves misunderstood, although they know what is happening and are aware that they are being humiliated. But they remain in a very clear position concerning their ideals. Their faith stands firm and is strengthened although it is not always able to be expressed in words but is seen with the eyes of faith by the religious who accompany the people. The East Timorese religious feel solidarity with the people and because of that feel obligated to express the people's experience of faith. They are in the midst of the people, in a position which helps us to understand and formulate better the faith of the people, particularly because we know the language, beliefs and heart of the people.

That which was feared has truly happened: the people's way of life has been turned upside down and the basis of the community life has been destroyed. Masses of the population have been forced to shift in large numbers to places far away and unknown. This has already happened several times and in the last few months many East Timorese have been exiled from their own homeland. Consequently, apart from having lost all their possessions, there is alienation and disintegration of families. There are continually new orders from above on 'security' which actually destroys and confuses the people. People who have been concentrated in certain areas and who live in dire poverty, in an atmosphere of false peace, have been forced to accompany the army to the mountains. A few months ago some villages were noted which were entirely empty of male inhabitants because all the male work force was forced to leave their families, houses, fields and work just to accompany the Indonesian army morning and night for months on end without any medical care and food at all. They were aged 12 to 55. The seriousness of the health problems and the rebellious mood of those who return to their huts can no longer be denied.

In the meantime those who remain at home are the mothers, wives, daughters and older people who live out their faith and sadness in continual prayer.

The people are now experiencing oppression without end, their rights are not acknowledged. The people do not have a voice and live in fear. Indeed the people live in a situation of continual war and thus must be silent and submissive. The produce of their soil is seized, such as coffee, teak, cattle and even their property rights. The army monopolizes everything. Confronted by this situation the people do not get an explanation for any of it. Thus they suffer more, and feel their faith more.

The people are aware that their faith comes from God whose Word takes the form of social justice. This justice derives from the justice of God in His relations with His people. This justice must be built by the people themselves based on faith and cooperation with God and one's fellow people who are sacrificed to oppression. For us living the faith without serious endeavors for the building of social justice is making faith merely foreign and mystical. Creating justice together with the present Indonesian government is not possible, or not yet, although the people desire justice greatly. A faith which illumines the minds of the people cannot develop in a Christian action, because social justice has not yet come into being. There is, as yet, no way out from the oppression from above. Because of that we, the religious, must always be alert and thoughtful that the faith of the people is not trodden on.

COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNITY AND RELIGIOUS OF INDONESIA

Our connections with the Universal Church, and with the religious and wider world were suddenly cut off. We are the religious of East Timor who together with the people were suddenly thrown into emptiness and alienation for six years until we became the silent Church of East Timor.

Now we are more aware of the faith and see that this experience was very useful because our faith was deepened and more felt in life as a gift from God. This faith says that we are still one with the universal Christian Church. It is precisely the dimensions of that universal faith which are being felt and deepened.

We are aware that we were 'persuaded' to have relations with the Indonesian Church which is the nearest Church and which is authorized by the Government and Army to straight away create relations with us. We hope that this 'persuasion' develops an honest meaning, both from our side, the East Timorese religious as well as from the Indonesian religious, all based on a faith which will help us become one religious fellowship in the Church.

It was just with this aim that we wrote these reflections. Only based on honesty, sincerity and openness without prejudice and underhand behavior can we build the Christian Church upholding the dignity of our people. We cannot put to one side or consider unimportant the misunderstandings and great difficulties which are a consequence of the actions of the government against the people, against the religious, the faithful and the Bishop.

These wounds must be healed via a long process from the two sides on the basis of sincereity in faith, hope and love. We must also acknowledge that we do not yet understand why the Indonesian Church and the Universal Roman Church have up till now stated openly and officially their solidarity with the Church, people and religious of East Timor. Perhaps this has been the heaviest blow for us .... We felt stunned by this silence which seemed to allow us to die deserted.

The Timorese students at the Seminary at Dare just on the outskirts of the city of Dili return to their own villages and districts every holidays. As students for the priesthood they have status and enjoy the confidence of the people. They also provide a link between the people and the central Church of Dili.This statement was written soon after their return from their Christmas break. It was written as a reflection of their latest experiences throughout the Territory.

The statement was presented to the President of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference who went to East Timor on the invitation of the head of the Church in East Timor, Mons. Carlos Filipe Belo, SDB. It is yet another indication that the situation in East Timor has become a serious concern for the Church and the people of Indonesia.

late January 1984.

On the reception of Your Grace's visit to our seminary, first we would like to wish you a most hearty welcome as the President of the Indonesian Episcopal Conference and at the same time we hope for harmony and the success of Your Grace's visit to our Diocese.

We would like to present to you below some information ... about the present situation in East Timor.

THE SITUATION OF EAST TIMOR:

You, Bishop, will be able to see and hear for yourself what is the situation of East Timor, especially in the threatened trouble spots which lead to constant killings. This can be seen by the increase in the number of Indonesian military units with their heavy military arms, bomber planes, and tanks that are now spread into every corner of East Timor. Apart from this almost on every occasion a misunderstanding will arise from among the Indonesian military who suspect people in urban areas of spreading unfounded rumours. This always brings with it news of suffering for many families. Such has happened in Lospalos, Viqueque, Ainaro and Jumalai where young children are burnt in a fire and grabbed from their parents to be cut up like animals before their parents' eyes. And orphaned children are taken away at knife point. The military, perhaps because of the anger in their hearts, do not seem to have a sense of humanity in them.

In this situation which is new to the people on this small island, it happens that parents are threatened with guns that there will be great hardships for the whole family unless they surrender their young school age daughters to be raped. There are also some women brought to court not to be tried by the court for what they are said to have done but because it provides an occasion to perform unholy acts upon them.

One action that now critically threatens the people of Timor, both in the city and in the mountains is the problem of the present military operation. For now they are taking boys and men aged 12 to 50 to join in the fighting - marched off into the forests without any weapons. In addition, they have to move ahead of the battle front with the military behind them. Why do ordinary citizens have to be forced into battle without any weapons?

Finally about what is happending to the missionaries of this Diocese of Dili. Lately our missionaries in a number of parishes are pushed around aggressively and their pastoral work is being stopped by the army who suspect and accuse them of doing things to help Fretilin. But in fact all they are doing is in accordance with what can be found in the Bible. In this manner the army break into the houses of priests and search through all that belongs to the parish.

Before we finish our statement about the critical situation on our small island we ask you most sincerely, Bishop, that you would tell all the Bishops and the priests and all the Catholic people of Indonesia to learn about our situation and conditions and pray for us and where possible to help bring about a just and peaceful solution for the sake of humanity in East Timor.

We would like to close by thanking you, your Grace most sincerely for your visit and friendship to our seminary. We ask God to Bless you in your faithful service for the salvation of all.

This letter by Bishop Belo to his predecessor Monsignor Martinho da Costa Lopes, relates the Indonesian offensive of late 1983 and the harassment of the Church by the Indonesian forces.

I received your letter and want to thank you for the clarification and news.

We are now in worse socio-political conditions. As you know the situation has become worse since August 8th. In all administrative areas people have been imprisoned (in Dili alone 600 people) and now they are going to be tried in military courts. Other people have disappeared. We do not know if these courts are impartial and if there are defense lawyers. In the areas of Lospalos, Viqueque, Baucau and Ainaro the war exists and the populations are encircled. They suffer from sickness, hunger, lack of liberty and persecution. In Lospalos alone there are ten battalions and these *bapaks* (Indonesians) cannot win the war. They thought they would clean up the situation by the end of December 1983, but now we are already in February and the end of the military operation cannot be seen. They (the Indonesians) started again to mobilize the civilian populations in the administrative areas of Covalima, Ainaro, Same, Manatuto, Baucau and Viqueque. We are surprised how in this country with so many battalions, helicopters, tanks and bombers they still need the support of the*rayat* (local population). And there the men go armed with sticks and cutlasses, leaving their ricefields and gardens. It is misery, Monsignor! The Red Cross does not enter the prisons, nor can I celebrate Eucharist for the political prisoners in the *Komarca* (a Dili prison).

In Muapitini (Lospalos) and Iliomar there are "public judgements", this means people implicated by having contacts with the mountain areas are killed in front of the inhabitants by knife, cutlass and the beating with sticks and by their own family members... And the *bapak* (Indonesian) laughs with contentment, rubs his hands together and says that it is not his fault... It is a macabre situation that we are living. This is more or less a pale image of what we are going through. I ask you, Monsignor, to continue to pray for us and to launch an appeal to the free world to open its eyes to the barbarities of which the Indonesians are capable. The Church is being persecuted and accused and our schools are being searched and the students are being interrogated. The residence of the Salesian priests in Baucau was "savagely" searched by the Red Berets (elite Indonesian military units). Well, Monsignor, I hope that this letter will reach your hands. Without anything else special to communicate I only ask you to take care of our economic interests in the Metropolis and to convince the priests who are there to return to Timor.

Fr Francisco Fernandes is an East Timorese priest who now lives in Macao. His presentation at a CISET seminar in Melbourne lashed out at those who call any protest about the East Timor situation as an action by communists. He says this is a plot by Indonesians.

My fellow Christians,

My name is Francisco Fernandes. I am a Timorese Catholic priest, involved in the welfare of Timorese refugees since 1975 - first in Atambua, Indonesia, then for three years in Portugal and now in Western Australia where I am chaplain to the Portuguese-speaking community and honorary chairman of the Timorese community in diaspora.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation, and the appreciation of all Timorese, for the aid and support which our fellow Australian Christians - in particular Australian Catholic Relief, have given to the East Timorese people both in East Timor and in Portugal and Australia. With your help, many have been spared great suffering.

Second, I would like to say why I am here today. If this was a conference about the Church in the Philippines or the Church in El Salvador or Poland, it would be possible for a representative of those Churches to be present. This is not possible for the Church in East Timor, though it is only a short plane flight from Australia. Why? Because, like East Timor itself, the Church is cut off from the outside world and denied the right to travel and communicate freely with its sister Churches throughout the world. I am here, therefore, because it is my obligation to be a voice for my Timorese brothers and sisters - like the Holy Father, John-Paul II, is for Poland.

The Church has played a central role in the history of East Timor ever since its discovery by the Portuguese in the late 16th century. In fact, the first Portuguese to land in Timor were some Dominican monks between 1515 and 1520. This fact - that Timor was discovered by priests - has a particular meaning for the Timorese. It is reflected in their traditions, legends and beliefs, creating an atmosphere of friendship and sympathy for all who belong to the Church. And this is why the Church has operated in East Timor for over four centuries without knowing persecution.

It is true that the Church cooperated with the Government in the Portugalisation of Timor. Thus it enjoyed many Government privileges such as an annual Government financial grant, exemption from taxation, free land for the establishment of buildings and coffee plantations, assistance with the passage of personnel to and from Timor, and so on.

But whilst the Church education system in particular was directed at the Portugalisation of Timor, it is also true that the Church did not neglect its role of providing a sound frame of reference to Timorese students equipping them to distinguish right from wrong and to value justice.

This is one reason why many students left school with a different view from the one they were supposed to acquire in the course of their school training and later became leaders in the struggle against Indonesia.

What I want to make clear at this point is that the people of East Timor are not communist. Over 50% are Catholic and the rest mainly follow their traditional way of life. Very few of the Fretilin leaders were 'marxist'. Xavier do Amaral, Nicolau Lobato and Rogerio Lobato, Fretilin leaders, were Catholics educated in the same seminary as I was.

The Timorese people are nationalists. They want a free and independent East Timor. For this they are forced to fight, with great loss of life, and are called 'communist' by Indonesia and others, when really they are defending their freedom.

The real 'communists' are those who have inflicted such terrible suffering on us - the perpetrators of the killings, the looting, famine and imprisonment, and the making of thousands of widows and orphans. In this regard, Bishop Ribeiro gave a good answer to an Indonesian General who asked him, a couple of weeks after the invasion: "How many communists are there in East Timor". Monsignor Ribeiro replied: "Before the invasion there were four or five marxists. After the invasion there were thousands". The Indonesian General was surprised by this response and asked: "Where are these thousands of communists?" Monsignor Ribeiro replied without hesitation: "These thousands of communists are your soldiers".

So I appeal to you - do not fall into the Indonesian trap and call our freedom fighters left wingers and so on. To go along with this sort of Indonesian propaganda is only to support a criminal policy against the innocent, to give them an end which in the eyes of many justifies the means. This is a grave falsehood, a gross injustice to my people.

I said earlier that the Church has always played a central role in Timorese history. This is true today. In their suffering, the people have turned to the Church for every form of assistance. For food, for medicine and clothing, for housing, for education, for spiritual encouragement. I have with me a photo of a ceremony in honour of Our Lady taken several months ago. The huge crowd in the photo is a vivid illustration of the support the people give the Church.

They have also turned to the Church for protection of their human rights. And no one in East Timor has been a stronger defender of the people's rights than the acting Bishop, Monsignor da Costa Lopes. He has always acted in this way. I recall how in 1959 he saved many people from being sent to prison in Angola by the Portuguese secret police (PIDE) who accused the people of rebelling against Portugal. I recall, too, how in Fretilin times he protected people against the abuses of some Fretilin leaders. And today he speaks out against abuses and exploitation by the Indonesian army. That is why I was very sad and angry when in 1982 some Australians attacked him and criticised him as a liar. Fortunately, however, Bishop Gerry of Brisbane, the chairman of Australian Catholic Relief, publicly defended him and for that all Timorese are grateful.

The East Timorese people have turned to the Church for protection and leadership. Now the Church, small as it is and burdened by the enormous responsibilities it must carry, has turned to the international church for help. What it wants, however, is not just more material assistance. What it asks for above all is solidarity.

What we ask of you is to help us achieve our freedom.

Australians know well the benefits and advantages of freedom. You also know well the misery which results from lack of freedom. As our near neighbours with whom a friendship was created during the Second World War, we beg you to support our struggle. We do not accept integration with Indonesia. How could we when it has been the cause of such enormous suffering for all of us? With the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, we vigorously affirm the right of all peoples to self-determination.

I will conclude with the words I spoke to a United States Congress committee in 1980:

Any attempt to address the problem of East Timor in humanitarian terms alone, to reduce East Timor to a question of more material aid and money, is both naive and unjust. Certainly the Timorese do not see it exclusively in these terms or think that more aid is the fundamental answer to our problem.

Our experience under Indonesia has convinced us that the key to our dignity and happiness lies in the exercise of our God-given right to self-determination.

Much deeper than the pain in our bellies or the disease in our bodies is the pain in our spirits that comes from the denial of our rights. We yearn only for our freedom, our freedom to live without fear, our freedom to speak our own language, our freedom to make our own decisions, and our freedom to enter the community of nations.

It is because the Church of the Gospel loves the poor and the oppressed that I have come before you today carrying the ashes of this dream of freedom for Timor burning in my heart.

Thankyou.
Francisco Fernandes.

> ***Much deeper than the pain in our bellies or the disease on our bodies is the pain in our spirits that comes from the denial of our rights. We yearn only for our freedom, our freedom to live without fear, our freedom to speak our own language, our freedom to make our own decisions, and our freedom to enter the community of nations.***
> ***-Francisco Fernandes***

This letter to Monsignor Belo and the priests, religious and laity of Dili from the Bishops of Indonesia marked Monsignor Belo's visit to the Indonesian Bishops' Conference in 1983. The letter gives a tremendous sense of how difficult and painful it can be to support the local Church of a region that sees the would be friend as closely allied with the oppressor. The letter bravely records the suffering of the East Timorese people.

PAX CHRISTI.

We the Bishops of Indonesia felt our hearts overflow with gratitude when the Shepherd of the Diocese of Dili, Msgr. Carlos Filipe Belo, whom we greatly respect, accepted our invitation in brotherly love and attended the recent Assembly of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference in November 1983.

Thus we are able to hear directly from him about the situation and about the true feelings of the people and the Catholics of East-Timor. We are able to meditate on the conditions of the people and our brothers in the faith, whom we embrace in our hearts as friends and brothers sharing fully in their joy and in their sorrow.

In the person of the Shepherd of the Church in East-Timor we have met in our hearts with all, but especially with those who are suffering, with those who have been wounded in body and spirit, with those who have lost parents, children, relatives and friends, with those who have lost their possessions, with those who have lost any source of income and even with those who have lost their lives. We are not exaggerating when we say that we, the Catholics of Indonesia, are always close in our prayers and works with Monsignor, with his predecessor, with the Priests, Brothers, Sisters and all the Catholics of the Diocese of Dili, whom we never forget.

We pray for all of those individuals who are suffering, that they be given strength of body and soul and that their Faith may remain firm. Sacrifice based on Faith, Hope and love has never been fruitless.

We do not want our solidarity with and our concern for the Church and the people of East Timor to be interpreted as any movement inspired by wordly considerations. Our attitudes and our actions are based on "the collegial nature and meaning of the episcopal order that found expression in the very ancient practice by which bishops appointed the world over were linked with one another and with the Bishop of Rome by the bonds of unity, charity and peace". (Lumen Gentium 22)

In the same way there is a relationship among the Faithful from all places.

It is because of this that we cannot refuse to confront the events that are happening among the people, especially those affairs which determine the welfare or the misery of the masses who are the victims of cruel oppression.

Thus, in accord with the wishes of the Fathers of the Council, we reaffirm that "the role and competence of the Church being what it is, she must in no way be confused with the political community nor bound to any political system". (Gaudium et Spec, 76)

Based on the above mentioned factors, the Catholic Church in Indonesia, which is ever conscious that our Founder and Saviour Jesus Christ loves all mankind, in spite of all restrictions has made every possible effort to express its solidarity and friendship with the Faithful and the people of East Timor who are being deluged by most bitter trials both physically and spiritually.

It is said that "those who dedicate themselves to the ministry of God's Word should use means and helps proper to the gospel. In many repects these differ from the support of the earthly city". (Gaudium et Spes, 76)

We present to the Faithful and the people of East Timor the most precious gift that we, the Church in Indonesia and the Churches in other parts of the world, can give, that is: "our efforts towards the application of justice and charity within and between nations" (Gaudium et Spes, 76). We give this along with the necessary aid that will help us to attain the harmony taught by our first teacher, Jesus Christ. We struggle so that with respect for all persons and with urgent haste we may attain first and foremost: a return to peace for all those who are now at war. We struggle through various ways to enforce acknowledgement and respect for those things which are considered most sacred by the people of East Timor: their religion, their family and their land. In other words, respect for personal property rights, a higher value for the lives and dignity of mankind and behaviour which is both civilized and just.

Moreover, we request understanding from all who control the decision making that any changes which will lead to a better situation can only be successful if they are carried out with a spirit of honesty.

We are conscious that the road to justice and peace demands an extraordinary sacrifice of feelings. We also believe that respect for each party will shine forth much clearer if they are brave enough, with the spirit of noble heros, to respect the human dignity of the other party. "Respect and love ought to be extended also to those who think or act differently than we do in social, political and religious matters too". (Gaudium et Spes, 28)

We believe, that for some time, but especially now at this time, the root of the problem has been directed toward the level of ability to understand the world of reason and of feelings of the other party, which in reality is most basic, uncomplex, and humanitarian. We also believe that the ability to understand the basic attitudes of mankind which are most simple and humanitarian, can still be found in both of the parties which are now confronting each other but for the past eight years have been striving for harmony, justice and peace.

The sympathy and solidarity of the Church of Indonesia and other countries with our brothers and sisters in East Timor who are suffering, is expressed not only in our prayers, but also in the form of material assistance, although from our hearts, we must confess that this has been a drop of water when compared to the ocean of pain that has been suffered by our brothers and sisters.

Following the requests of the leader of the Church in East Timor, we have tried to give special attention to the education of children and the formation of youth in the Diocese of Dili, by revitalizing the schools. Particularly for the orphans who have lost their parents, we direct funds that might lighten their sad fate.

Not forgotten are the widows and young girls who have been wounded both physically and spiritually whom we support with skill training so that they may be self-supporting. As far as our limitations allow, we have sent medicines for the sick and the wounded.

In preparation for the days when peace will prevail, we have tried to supply tools and equipment for workmen, who must find a means of livelihood. Though the number is relatively small, we prepare teachers and others to serve along with the Catholics of East Timor, in fulfilling the needs of the Diocese of Dili.

Truthfully, what we have done thus far has very little meaning when it is compared with the great needs and the large number of our brothers and sisters who are suffering. Nevertheless, whenever you, Monsignor, or your Priests, Brothers, Sisters, or your Catholics in East Timor feel the need to call us, we are always ready, in as far as we are able, to support the efforts of the Diocese of Dili; whether that be with prayers, with material aid, or with personnel. We offer this in order that a road might be found for the people and the Catholics of East Timor whereby they will reach a standard of life that will make it possible for them to feel free and at peace to carry out their vocation in life as is befitting the most loved sons and daughters of God.

We wish to emphasize to you Monsignor, and to your Priests, Brothers and Sisters whom we love, that whatever the Church in Indonesia has done and whatever efforts will be made in the future for the people and the Catholics of East Timor, it is not given with a feeling of superiority, nor it is given from an affluence of material goods.

We pray that we will be servants of love in the spirit of St. Paul and that our contribution "will not only be to fulfill the needs of the saints, but will also be a showering of praise to God" (II Cor. 8, 12).

In closing, we turn our hope to God, Our Father and to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, and to all who strive for peace. We pray that we will never be frightened from searching for a road to peace and a way to avoid the sacrifice of more victims in the future. We pray and hope for a lasting peace and a return to true harmony. As was stated by the Father of the Council, "Peace is not merely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an 'enterprise of justice'" (Gaudium et Spes no.78 Yes. 32, 7).

Toward that end the Church in East Timor, which is united in Christian Faith, Hope and Love, will be the vanguard, holding strong until the above ideals are attained. This struggle will not only bring great blessings for the people of East Timor, but will also be source of many graces for the Church in Indonesia.

May the grace and love of the Father protect and strengthen you, Monsignor and your Priests, Brothers, Sisters, and all of our brothers and sisters in the Faith. May you have consolation and fortitude. May the Holy Spirit guide you and direct all of us toward the path of truth.

We join with you, our brothers and sisters, with Christ in prayer and in the Holy Sacrifice.
Jakarta, November 17th, 1983.
Brotherly greetings in Christ.
Msgr. F.X. Hadisumarta, O. Carm.
President.
Msgr. Leo Soekoto, S.J.
Secretary.

This statement from the permanent council of the Portuguese Bishops on the situation in East Timor was issued in 1984. It contains a heartfelt sense of the solidarity of the Portuguese church with East Timor, that dates back to the very beginnings of their colonization of East Timor. It calls for respect for the entity that is East Timor.

28th March, 1984

1. In view of the news which lately has arrived with frequency from East Timor the Portuguese episcopate cannot help but manifest in a public document its living and deep solidarity with the people of this martyred country, victim of a tragedy which started nearly nine years ago and which unfortunately continues until now.
At the beginning of this tragedy, which has already caused many thousands of deaths, we find a sum of very grave mistakes made by all the parties involved. However, we do not pretend to analyse the degree of responsibilities of each of them; to do this would not only be vain but also inopportune because from our point of view the best way to contribute, as we would like to do, to the rapid cessation of so much suffering, is not to touch on the wounds that are still badly healed and to re-ignite hatreds which perhaps are already half asleep. We are only moved by the purpose of affirming that the pain of the Timorese people is also the pain of the Church.

2. Despite implications of another nature, which could be inventoried, it is deceptive to think that behind the sad events that occur in Timor, there would not be the consciousness of a strongly felt national entity, which does not want to see itself repressed or annihilated.
Timor aspires to the full expression of its own individuality and to hinder it signifies not only a physical genocide, but also we can say a "cultural" genocide, this last one is more grave because it affects as much the people who are dying as those who survive, and not only the present generations but also those of the future.

3. In the Timor drama the Portuguese Church feels involved because of the historic responsibility, which although indirect, the Church had during the appearance of Timor's national consciousness. In fact our missionaries arrived in Timor more than a century before the first governor who officially represented the Portuguese Crown, so that upon his arrival he found the local aristocracy already Christianized and the common people moving towards Christianity. Portuguese culture had already spread considerably by then, it had been absorbed and merged with local tradition, forming an integral part of the collective patrimony of the Timorese people; it was well accepted because it was not imposed, but freely assimilated.

In such a remote territory, so poor, so physically rugged, so needy of material means, the Church created from the 16th century schools, seminaries, monasteries, through which the local population had access not only to the Christian message, but also to the free transmission of all forms of human knowledge. If due to the suppression of the religious orders in 1834, this achievement did not have the expected continuity, it should not be forgotten that the missionaries had also introduced in Timor products, instruments and agricultural techniques which allowed the Timorese population to improve their nourishment, to better their economic condition and material well-being.

We believe that perhaps we could praise ourselves because of this. But if we prefer to glorify ourselves it is because of the fidelity towards God shown by all those Timorese brothers who through probation have become participants in the Passion of Christ and irrefutable testimony of the fact that the seed of the Gospel had not fallen in vain.

4. Convinced simultaneously of its divine authority, which comes from its specific mission, and of its human authority, which comes from its historic activity, the Church can and should make its voice heard so that the injustices suffered by the Timorese people will cease and that the Timorese people can, by themselves, in peace and in liberty, determine their own future.

This is why, while on the one hand we denounce the hateful exploitation which some try to make of the suffering of the Timorese people for the purpose of ideological propaganda, we on the other hand welcome all sincere efforts already undertaken to find a just solution to the problem. In particular we embrace the efforts of the Holy See in the actions it has carried out for the relief of the Timorese population and in defense of their human and religious rights.

We appeal to the Portuguese Government to which historically, morally, and juridically this task is being entrusted, and we appeal to the Indonesian Government, the occupying power, as well as to international organisations, which could act as intermediaries, and finally we appeal to the political leaders of Timor, in their homeland or in exile, asking them to dedicate their forces to obtaining rapidly and efficiently the end of this painful situation, which seems to be lasting forever. Safeguarding the legitimate interests of each of the parties involved, it should be guaranteed to the Timorese people that they will have continuity as a historic entity, with both self respect and the respect of neighbouring peoples.

Finally we exhort the faithful to pray for the comfort and mercy of God for those in Timor who in one way or another continue to suffer.

The Bishops of the Japanese Catholic Justice and Peace Council wrote to the Prime Minister of Portugal to encourage him to work for the self-determination of the East Timorese. In the letter the United Nations resolution on East Timor is quoted.

19 June 1984.

Prime Minister Mario Soares
Prime Minister of Portugal

Your Excellency,

We wish to extend our heartiest welcome to you upon the occasion of your coming to Japan and pray that your visit will be of great benefit to the people of Portugal and Japan.

Out of Christian concern for our suffering brothers and sisters in East Timor, we wish to plead with Your Excellency to do all in your power to carry out the mandate in your new constitution to make every effort to work for the realization of self-determination for the East Timorese who, despite annexation and invasion by Indonesia, continue to struggle for their independence and for the survival of their culture.

In its 1983 session, the UN Human Rights Commission passed a resolution affirming the "inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV)", and for "all interested parties, namely Portugal, as the administering power, and the representatives of the East Timorese people, as well as Indonesia, to cooperate fully with the UN with a view to guaranteeing the free and full exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of East Timor."

Reports continue to come in about many arrests, human rights violations, and disappearances of East Timorese. There are also reports of recurring famine.

We are indeed saddened by the plight of the East Timorese people and pray that any efforts you make on their behalf will bring the fighting in East Timor to a stop and put an end to the suffering of the people there.

We pray also, Your Excellency, for your good health and the welfare of your nation.

Pax Christi International made a submission to the 40th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. Monsignor Martinho da Costa Lopes, Apostolic Administrator of Dili prior to Bishop Belo, presented the submission calling for East Timorese sovereignty.

Mr Chairman,

First of all, I would like to thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to produce some considerations concerning the plight of East Timor. As you know, East Timor lies some 400 miles off the North-West coast of Australia. Before World War II, the Western half of the island was administrated by the Netherlands, and the Eastern half by Portugal. When Indonesia achieved its independence from the Netherlands, in 1949, the Western half became part of Indonesia, while Portugal continued to administer the Eastern half - EAST TIMOR - until 1974, when it decided to decolonize East-Timor by permitting a formation of the local and political parties - UDT, FRETILIN, APODETI, KOTA and TRABALHISTA - as a first step towards self-determination by the East Timorese people.

In August 1975, the Portuguese authorities evacuated East-Timor during civil disorders fomented in part by the Indonesians. In November 1975 FRETILIN proclaimed the Democratic Republic of East-Timor independent and on December 7th, 1975, Indonesia invaded and annexed the territory. More than 100,000 East Timorese have died from war, famine and disease.

Since the Indonesian invasion of East-Timor, in 1975, the United Nations consistent with its principles and Charter, have always reaffirmed the right of East Timorese people to self-determination. In fact, according to the principles of United Nations Charter and in accordance with the international Covenants on Civil and Political Rights: "all peoples have the right of self-determination". The Timorese are people. Therefore they have the right to self-determination.

Although the principles are clear enough and favouring the cause of East-Timor, however, some nations have been reluctant to recognize it in practical terms. Some said they have commercial links, a big financial investment in Indonesia, and so they are afraid of losing such a big market as Indonesia. So, generally, they have been always abstaining in their votations in the General Assembly and practically they have denied the right of self-determination to East-Timor. To some extent, I understand their position, when they strive to seek good relations and commercial links with Indonesia. But, what I can't understand is that they willingly sacrifice the right of self-determination of East-Timor in exchange of money, commerce and material commodities. I do not approve such a criterion. I think in a conflict raised between Human Rights and commerce, we have to give priority to Human Rights, which are fundamental to human beings.

On the other hand I think that there is no contradiction between commercial links and Human Rights. So, we can promote commercial links with Indonesia, but at the same time we have to recognize the right of East-Timorese people to self-determination and independence.

I know that it was suggested East-Timor should be regarded as a natural part of Indonesia, because of historical, ethnic, cultural and geographical ties between the two countries. In my opinion, this argument does not stand up to close scrutiny. In fact, the Timorese people and Indonesians are essentially distinct people. The Timorese people are Melanesians, while the Indonesians are Javanese. On the other side, if geographical contiguity and tenuous historical and other links provide legitimate grounds for this incorporation, Indonesia could also justifiably annex the Eastern states of Malaysia and Papua-New-Guinea, which share these traits in common with Indonesia. But, there is another objection: that Indonesians have spent a lot of money in East-Timor since 1975 until now. I really accept the fact but I have another interpretation of aid, quite different.

Firstly I would like to put beforehand this question. Who forced Indonesians to spend much money in East-Timor? Secondly, it should not be forgotten that such expenditure is intended to consolidate integration by furthering the Indonesianization of East-Timor, which is the very point at issue. Thirdly, with these expenditures the Indonesians are trying to deflect your attention from other facets, such as military activities, manifold restrictions on basic liberties, human rights abuses and so on.

We know that some delegations went last year to visit East-Timor, but unfortunately they were not able to ask the people what they want. I am East-Timorese myself and I know very well what are the feelings in their hearts. So, I can tell you what they want. What they want is the opportunity to decide for themselves their own political future. In my view point, it seems that only a genuine and completely free act of self-determination will bring peace to East-Timor and the war will go on and on, for as long as natural justice and freedom are denied to the East-Timorese people.

After 8 years of war, the resistance of the people is going on against the Indonesian aggression. This seems to be a clear indication that the East-Timorese people want not to be integrated by force into the

Republic of Indonesia, but rather to be independent and rule their own political destiny. I myself would have no objection, if the East-Timorese people, free of all kind of pressures, from inside or outside, chose integration with Indonesia. But on the contrary, if the East-Timorese people want to be independent at all cost, I will have no doubt at all to follow it, because it will be the right way based on their peoples' free will, on the democracy.

The Major Superiors of the Religious Orders in Australia wrote to Monsignor Belo and the East Timorese church affirming the work for East Timor's autonomy. They call for a reconciliation that respects the East Timorese people.

21st February, 1984

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recognising that the Church is a sign and instrument of the Kingdom, we the Major Superiors of Religious in Australia write to express our heartfelt support for all your efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace in East Timor. We know that this is the deepest aspiration of your people.

We write to you as a neighbouring Church, remembering our strong historical ties, and in response to your repeated calls especially to Christians to recognise your struggles for justice and a peaceful resolution of the people's hopes. We know the people of East Timor look to you, the leaders of the Church, for strength in their desire to preserve life, human dignity and cultural identity in their land. Many are the victims of other people's decisions to impose their solutions violently.

We are deeply saddened by nine years of war causing almost continued suffering. We are now aware that the military occupation has had a devastating and irreparable effect on all sections of the population. It has been instrumental in widespread famine and malnutrition, family disunity, enforced separation from traditional land, an alarming increase in the number of orphans and widows and disregard for the rights of religious belief, human respect, personal property and life itself. Above all we are most concerned by the lack of opportunity given to the people of East Timor to participate in decisions affecting both their socio-political future and the economic, cultural and even family affairs of daily life.

We are told that many social and economic benefits have been offered to the people. It is not within our competence to make political assessments of either side. While we continue to pray for reconciliation we can see that no conclusive solution is imminent. Radically alternative solutions are now called for, and in such a situation we feel it is our right and duty to stand behind the People of God in your country as they search for the Truth.

In this we recognise your expressed wish that the international community be given full opportunity to scrutinise events in East Timor and to assist in a just resolution of the present impasse. As followers of Jesus Christ we feel we cannot condone any attempt to resolve the disenchantment and oppression of the people of East Timor through the exercise of military power, dislocation and harassment.

While we continue to offer our prayers and material assistance through appropriate channels we request your direction and suggestions concerning what we can do to help proclaim the good news of freedom and justice for the people of your country.

The Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR) convened an international conference on East Timor in 1985. They issued a "Declaration on Behalf of East Timor".

Recognising that the territory of East Timor has been illegally occupied by Indonesia since December 1975, inflicting extreme loss of life and destruction;
Recognising that the Indonesian policy to isolate East Timor prevents the International Committee of the Red Cross and other relief and development agencies from reaching those in need, and denies the international community opportunities to assess the wishes of the people independently;
Condemning the human rights violations committed since 1975, as reported by church leaders in East Timor and by independent human rights organisations;
Recognising that the east Timorese have been denied their right to self-determination;
Welcoming, finally, UN General Assembly 37/30 which asked the UN Secretary-General "to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem", and acknowledging the steps which have been taken to bring Portugal and Indonesia into negotiations;

We affirm that negotiations will not lead to a just settlement unless they:
1. Involve representatives of the East Timorese people including those who resist the present occupation.

2. Secure an end to hostilities which prevent the people of East Timor and their representatives from contributing freely to negotiations leading to self-determination.
3. Provide internationally acceptable conditions of access to relief and development agencies and to independent visitors, journalists and diplomats.
4. Include an act of self-determination, which is free from interference and verified by international observers acceptable to the East Timorese people.

We commend all international initiatives which observe these principles, and will call upon our government to support actively a process of negotiation conducted on such terms.

The English Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR) is very active in its work for Human Rights and Peace. Their report to the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation in 1986 looks at the history of the Church's involvement in, and advocacy on behalf of, East Timor. Its call is for peace.

It is natural in the United Nations that discussion of issues such as East Timor should focus initially on principles - the principle of self-determination, the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other nations and peoples, and the basic principles of human freedom which are enshrined in the UN Charter.

Testimonies from East Timor.
As a non-governmental organisation associated with the Catholic Church which works with communities in various countries who are struggling to resolve very fundamental problems of poverty and oppression, CIIR would like to begin at another level. Firstly, here is a priest in East Timor writing at Christmas 1982:

The people live in an atmosphere of terror, day and night, arbitrary imprisonment, fear, forbidden to speak of certain matters, forbidden to listen to foreign broadcasts, living in a concentration camp style of housing. All of this makes life for the people very difficult. That is the reality today in East Timor.

This second letter, also from a priest, was written in July 1984:

The greatest suffering now is that the people are confined to their villages, have nothing to eat, are ill-treated, tortured, detained, raped, killed. They are suffering from hunger, but they have no drugs because the authorities will not allow drugs to circulate for fear that some may fall into the hands of the resistance. Illness and hunger are also carrying out their policy of exterminating of the population. On 15 May [wrote a priest again, also in 1984] in the town of Laleia, an Indonesian soldier was seen openly kicking a head in the street. It seemed to be a boy's. All the people witnessed this in silence without saying a word or showing any reaction. Fear forces the people to hide their strongest feelings of revulsion.

Finally, here is part of a letter written by an East Timorese in February 1986 to Mgr. da Costa Lopes, who was in charge of East Timor's Catholic Church between 1978 and 1983.

If you go through the villages of Luro, Laivai, Tutuala, Iliomar, Uatolari, Cajularan, Lacluta and so on, you will see that the people live in a state of permanent encirclement. They are not allowed to go more than three kilometres outside their villages. In addition they always have to have a 'pass' issued by the Indonesian military authorities. It happens easily that East Timorese are accused of having contacts with the guerrillas, and that they immediately become victims of torture, massacres, etc. The people live in huts, but at night they are forced to sleep in ditches inside and outside of the hut. The people live in constant fear. The Javanese, however, are also afraid and hide themselves. The militia control the night. In Uatolari the Indonesians set up barbed wire around the centre of the village. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the whole population has to be in this fenced-off area. This way it is evident that the people continue to be severely hit by hunger. Their gardens and plantations are abandoned. They live like cattle at gunpoint.

These letters, written over a period of several years, present a haunting image of a population deprived of basic freedoms, occupied and unable to manage their own lives, and terrorised by violence. All these extracts present a situation remarkably similar in character: it is one in which the entire society of East Timor - most particularly the rural society in which the vast majority of Timorese live - has been silenced and held in the physical control of the Indonesian armed forces.

The role of the church.
These letters were all written by priests or to priests. The Catholic Church is not a political organisation. Because of this, it can sometimes speak with rare authenticity on behalf of the people it serves.

It has not always done so. For much of its history, the Catholic Church in East Timor was a colonial church, perceived by the majority of the people to represent values and forces foreign to their culture. Until very recently, the majority of the population - between 60% and 70% - practised animist religions.

Since 1985, however, a great change has occurred. According to both diocesan and Indonesian government statistics, between 70% and 80% of the population have become Catholics. The last correspondent I quoted explains why they have done so: the church 'has tried to ease the suffering and pain of our people morally and materially,' he wrote. 'The church identified itself with the East Timorese people. That is why the church also suffers with its people.'

It is because the Catholic Church in East Timor is believed to be speaking truthfully about the situation there, and representing the aspirations of East Timor's people, that concern within the Christian churches is now so widespread.

In June 1985 Pope John Paul II told Mgr Filipe Ximenes Belo, who is currently in charge of the diocese, to 'fight the suffering of the people and seek for a right solution for peace in Timor.' 'The Holy See,' he said in 1984, 'continues to follow the situation in East Timor with preoccupation and with the hope that particular consideration will be given in every circumstance to the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of the people (...) It is the ardent wish of the Holy See that all rights of individuals be respected and that every effort be made to lighten the sufferings of the people by facilitating the work of relief organisations and by ensuring the access of humanitarian aid to those in need.'

The same preoccupations have been echoed by Catholic bishops and bishops' conferences in Indonesia, Portugal, the Netherlands, the United States, Japan, Brazil and other countries, and by religious congregations and many other Catholic organisations, including Pax Christi, Pax Romana, and European and Asian Justice & Peace groups.

Nor has concern been confined to Catholics. In November 1985 the Portuguese Council of Protestant Churches joined their voice 'to all those around the world who are calling for an immediate end to the present situation in East Timor', and appealed to churches of all denominations throughout the world to 'work to ensure that the people of East Timor may continue to live, and live in freedom.' Concern has been expressed by representatives of the Protestant churches within the Christian Conference of Asia, by Quakers, by Protestant organisations in Europe.

Mr Chairman, such widespread concern and solidarity would not be forthcoming if the conviction did not exist that the church in East Timor is speaking the truth, that its information is supported by evidence and that its conclusions derive not from any partisan political allegiance but from its pastoral experience.

The church's criticisms.

What has the Catholic church in East Timor been saying?

Firstly, it has deplored the cruelty of the violence, and the abuses of human rights which have taken place. Mgr Belo and his predecessor, Mgr Martinho de Costa Lopes, have each denounced atrocities against the population and described the hardships suffered by ordinary people since 1975. Most recently, in July 1986, Mgr Belo withdrew church personnel from an Indonesian government training programme after a priest was beaten by soldiers in Lautem, as 'our strongly felt protest against the brutal and inhuman behaviour which continues to occur and which belittles our pastors.'

It has criticised the effects of the Indonesian government's counter-insurgency policies, under which whole communities have been moved from their homes into villages under army surveillance. The countryside has been bombed with artillery and from the air. In one documented cause alone, that of the offshore island of Atauro, several thousand people were taken from their villages and held on the island and then moved to other areas, distant from their original communities.

It has drawn attention to abuses in the administration's economic and social policies. The Indonesian government's implementation of its birth control programme was criticised by Mgr Belo in 1984, for example, because officials were going 'through the villages and little settlements indiscriminately distributing contraceptives (pills, injections and other devices). The agents of the programme do not give any prior information to the population.'

The Catholic Church has warned against too simple an interpretation of the administration's economic development policies. In a pastoral letter written on the occasion of the United Nations' Year of Development, Participation & Peace, Mgr Belo made clear what development means for the church.

"In the Christian view [he wrote in 1985], development cannot be reduced to simple economic growth... to be authentic it must be well-rounded; it must foster the development of each person and of the whole person. Above all, this development must be directed towards human beings."

It is feared that the economic policies currently implemented by the Indonesian government do not benefit the people who depend on the land, who are the poorest and most deprived. They emphasise the production of export crops on plantations whereas production for subsistence has been crippled by war and the effects of the government's counter-insurgency policies. Rather than helped, farming communities have been prevented from working their land, or have been relocated without free choice to new areas. It is also well know that the export companies operating in East Timor pay very low prices to small farmers, though the profits from coffee and other crops have been substantial. Most of the export companies are owned by Indonesian interests, particularly interests associated with the Indonesian army.

Finally, the church has criticised the erosion of Timorese culture and identity as the result of attempts to Indonesianise East Timor, by promoting the values of *Pancasila* in schools and in the media, without consideration or proper respect for the language and way of life of the society.

Ten years of oppression.

In short, fear and mistrust have come to govern the lives of the population, who for ten years have been virtually isolated from the world and, within Timor itself, have been unable to travel at will, or engage in normal economic activity, trust one another or speak freely. Individuals suspected of sympathising with those who continue to resist Indonesia's rule have been punished by death and torture as well as arrest and detention. The Indonesian period of government has been characterised by substantial and widespread violations of human rights, including torture, imprisonment without trial, disappearances and extra-judicial killings.

The isolation of East Timor.

Organisations like CIIR are sometimes condemned for criticising the Indonesian government's record when we have not visited the territory. We wholly agree that this is unsatisfactory and it is not our usual practice. It is not a problem of our own making, however. In 1982 CIIR welcomed an invitation from the Indonesian Embassy in London to visit East Timor. In view of the sensitivity of the issues, and the need to provide objective information, we invited a number of academic and technical specialists to accompany us, and asked to visit one year later in July 1983. We asked to go with us a lecturer in international law from the School of Oriental & African Studies in London, a pediatrician employed by the London School of Tropical Medicine, an agronomist, a development agency representative fluent in *bahasa indonesia,* and an academic able to speak two local languages and Portuguese. Yet, though we gave one year's notice, we were eventually obliged to cancel shortly beforehand because the Indonesian authorities were unable to confirm their own invitation.

More than ten years after Indonesia invaded East Timor, the issues facing the international community are surely clear. The occupation itself is acknowledged to have contravened the principles of international conduct and the UN Charter. There are differences of view about the scale of human rights abuses or about particular incidents, but there is no dispute that numerous and serious violations have taken place throughout the period since 1975. All parties acknowledge that resistance and opposition to Indonesia's rule continue.

Principle and practice.

A consensus exists on these matters. Yet political support for self-determination and for returning the territory to the pre-1975 position has steadily declined - as successive votes in the General Assembly demonstrate. There is a visible gap between the international principles of diplomacy and its practice. The international community is in a position to shelve the matter of East Timor - a small territory, from which the Indonesian government cannot easily be dislodged - or confront the issues it raises and seek to resolve them justly, in accordance with international law.

It is here that the attitudes of East Timor's people become very important. It may still be assumed by many that, with time, they will accustom themselves to Indonesian rule and grow to accept it. Such an assumption may be quite false.

During the years CIIR has worked on this question, we have met a number of East Timorese and clergy working in the territory. These people have held different political views. Some would agree that in 1975 they did not oppose Indonesia. Not one, from those we have met, has denied that today the very great majority of East Timorese - including many of those who were originally sympathetic to integration with Indonesia - have been alienated by the Indonesian government's exercise of power. All accepted that opposition to Indonesian rule is now deeper and stronger than it was before - though its expression is, of course, greatly limited by the restrictions on freedom of speech and movement which continue to be imposed by the Indonesian government.

Those we have talked to do *not* agree about the form of régime they would like to see replacing the present one. They differ about what form of government East Timor's people would choose if they were consulted. They are unanimous only in their conviction that the invasion of 1975 was deeply resented, that its effects have traumatised the society and that Indonesia's presence today is even less acceptable to the people than it was in 1975 - even if it has to be accepted, because of force.

We have been particularly struck by the frequency with which people to whom we have spoken have declared that resistance and opposition will continue indefinitely, and that the cycle of repression and alienation, followed by resistance and further repression, may in practice by virtually irreversible.

It is this conviction which explains why the Catholic Church in East Timor has emphasised the importance of consulting representatives of the people and why Mgr Belo wrote, as he did in 1984, that

"The only solution to the East Timor conflict is a political and diplomatic one, and this solution should include, above all, the respect for the right of a people for self-determination (...) As long as this is not implemented, there will not be a peaceful solution for East Timor."

If this is right, the international community must ask itself whether it is prepared to accept such a situation, which is the forseeable consequence if governments take the less contentious diplomatic option and accept an unjust and violent *fait accompli* rather than support the principles of the United Nations Charter, however uncomfortable these may be. This is the International Year of Peace. The initiative of the Secretary General with regard to East Timor offers an appropriate, possibly unique, opportunity for governments to show their commitment to the concept of international community which is represented by the United Nations, and so further the cause of peace.

But let it be a just peace - involving the support of all parties, specifically the people of East Timor who are the most directly concerned. In the words adopted by the Catholic bishops of Indonesia in 1983, when they wrote to express their sympathy to the Catholic Church in East Timor,

"Peace is not merely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice."

The US Bishops roundly condemned the genocidal actions of Indonesia in this situation on East Timor. In it they point particularly to the practice of enforced sterilization and birth control that come in the context of over 100,000 murders by Indonesia in East Timor.

STATEMENT ON EAST TIMOR

The brutal invasion and takeover of East Timor by Indonesia, which started in 1975 after the collapse of the Portuguese colonial administration, has in recent years begun to receive the attention it deserves, but this attention has not yet been translated into the action needed to right the wrongs which continue to this day.

In July 1984 Pope John Paul II expressed grave concern over the East Timor situation while receiving the credentials of the new Indonesian ambassador to the Holy See. Bishops' Conferences and Catholic Justice and Peace Commissions in Western Europe - in Portugal, West Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands - as well as in Canada and Japan, have made statements or otherwise communicated support and sympathy for the East Timorese and concern over the armed conflict that persists in the territory. This conflict has seen an estimated 100,000 East Timorese (of a population of less than 700,000 before the Indonesian invasion) perish as a result of the Indonesian occupation.

There is a pressing need to guarantee freedom of expression for, and an end to intimidation of, the Roman Catholic Church in East Timor, which has the heavy responsibility of attending to the spiritual needs of a people that has suffered grievous losses since 1975, and has seen its tasks multiplied during this period. A serious effort to bring a just and authentic peace to East Timor should be made.

Forced Birth control measures introduced by Indonesia in East Timor are especially disturbing, and not only because of the Church's abhorrence of unnatural birth control. Given the great loss of life that has already taken place among a largely Catholic people, this Indonesian policy takes on the character of genocide. Accounts of sterilization of East Timorese men and women without their informed consent and an array of other evidence, impel us to call for an immediate end to this policy; "For in view of the inalienable human right to marry and beget children, the question of how many children should be born belongs to the honest judgement of parents. The question can in no way be committed to the decision of government." (Gaudium et Spes 87)

While East Timor has received increased notice in recent years, it is nonetheless undeniable that this issue exists far from the great political debates of the day, and is all too likely to be overlooked as pressing national and international issues compete for public attention. East Timor's remoteness and isolation from the outside world make its inhabitants all the more vulnerable. It is therefore crucial that the East Timor tragedy be highlighted whenever possible, and that efforts continue to enhance the dignity of life in East Timor and the right of the territory's inhabitants to live in peace and freedom.

The United States, which has had friendly relations with the government of Indonesia since 1965 and which has contributed much economic and military assistance to Indonesia, surely has the right to raise these issues with that government. Appropriate representation by the United States could influence the government of Indonesia to take measures that would help bring a just and authentic peace to the territory, end any policies of forced birth control in East Timor, and in other ways ameliorate the suffering of these unfortunate people.

USSC Administrative Board
March 25, 1987.

This 1987 document organised by the Dutch Commission for Justice and Peace and other European Church groups, highlights the terrible situation that East Timor has endured since 1975. It looks at the human, economic and political situation and proffers a Christian response. It was a significant International Church document also published by the Australian Church.

For more than a decade, we have followed the situation in East Timor and listened with sorrow to the experience of the East Timorese church.

Conscious of the suffering which is being endured by East Timor's people, Christians and non-Christians in many countries have expressed their concern. In 1975, while Portugal and East Timor were engaged in a difficult period of decolonisation, the Indonesian armed forces invaded the territory, which from that time has been under military occupation. Ever since, East Timor has been the subject of dispute in the United Nations and between governments because it raises important questions of international law and justice.

The Concern of the Churches.

The churches' concern about East Timor has been expressed on many occasions, by bishops and bishops' conferences in Indonesia, Portugal, Holland, the United States, Japan and by Justice and Peace Commissions and local churches in many countries.

The Catholic church recognises East Timor to be a territory in dispute. The Diocese of Dili, which serves East Timor's Catholics, is administered directly from Rome, and governed by an Apostolic Administrator; it is not attached to the Indonesian Bishops' Conference. "The Holy See continues to follow the situation in East Timor with preoccupation and with the hope that particular consideration will be given in every circumstance to the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of the people," said Pope John Paul II in 1984. He went on to emphasise the need to safeguard human rights, declaring that "it is the ardent wish of the Holy See that all rights of individuals be respected and that every effort be made to lighten the sufferings of the people by facilitating the work of relief organisations and by ensuring the access of humanitarian aid to those in need". When the Apostolic Administrator, Monsignor Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, was received by the Pope in June 1985, John Paul II told him to "work for the church, to fight the suffering of the people, and seek for a right solution for peace in Timor".

In November 1983, the Catholic Bishops of Indonesia wrote to the clergy in East Timor, acknowledging the suffering and oppression experienced by the people of the territory and affirming that it was the responsibility of the Indonesian church "to struggle ... to enforce acknowledgment and respect for those things which are considered most sacred to the people of East Timor; their religion, their family and their land". They urged the church in East Timor to be the "vanguard of a peace that is more than an absence of war, a balance of power between enemies or what can be brought about by dictatorship".

The Portuguese Catholic bishops issued a similar declaration of sympathy in March 1984, saying they could not "abstain from manifesting their great anxiety and deep felt solidarity with the people of this martyrised country, which is victim of a tragedy. Timor aspires to the full expression of its own identity; to impede this not only means a physical genocide, but also a 'cultural' genocide (which) attacks both the survivors and those who die, and future as well as present generations". In November 1985 the Portuguese Protestant Council of Churches also issued a statement. "We join our voice to all those around the world who are calling for an immediate end to the present situation in East Timor".

Protestant churches in many countries have debated the question and raised it with their governments. In Asia and the Pacific, associations and communities of both Catholics and Protestants have given their public support to the rights of East Timor's people to self-determination. The issue was recently the subject of controversy within the Christian conference of Asia.

The Witness of the Church in East Timor.

Above all, the Catholic Church of East Timor, working in great isolation and under obvious political constraints, has itself witnessed to the tragic experience of the territory's people.

Mgr. Belo and his predecessor Mgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes have each denounced atrocities against the population and described the hardships suffered by ordinary people since 1975. East Timorese priests and the religious working in East Timor have consistently reported violations of human rights and made plain the degree to which the people of the territory, Christians and non-Christians alike, feel themselves to be oppressed in their daily lives and in their hope of freedom and peace.

"The people are now experiencing oppression without end, their rights are not acknowledged. The people do not have a voice and live in fear. Indeed the people live in a situation of continual war, and thus must be silent and submissive. But they remain in a very clear position concerning their ideals. Their faith stands firm and is strengthened, though it is not always able to be expressed in words." (The Religious in East Timor reflecting upon their experience in 1981 to the Religious in Indonesia.)

"The war ... goes on and continues to grow," (wrote the Catholic Council of priests of Dili in 1985). "The evidence for this is the continual arrival of Indonesian troops with heavy war material ..."

"In East Timor we are witnessing an upheaval of gigantic and tragic proportions in the social and cultural fabric of the Timorese people and their identity is threatened with death." (Statement, January 1 1985).

A Human Disaster.

In speaking of the conflict in East Timor, and the acute humanitarian and social difficulties faced by Timor's people, it is almost impossible to overstate the effects of the invasion and the conflict which followed it.

There is first of all the cruelty of the physical violence: as a direct and indirect result of the conflict, it is believed that more than 200,000 people have died from an original population estimated to number less than 700,000.

In the absence of a settlement, the Indonesian authorities face the opposition of large sections of the population, which can only be concealed by violent repression and unacceptable forms of social control. This opposition is most clearly revealed by the guerilla war which has continued for 11 years.

Whole communities have been moved from their homes into villages under army surveillance. The countryside has been bombed with artillery and from the air. Subsistence agriculture, upon which most Timorese based their lives, has become impossible in many parts. In 1978-79, there was a major famine and even now, there are regularly food shortages in many areas.

The war has been characterised by substantial and widespread violations of human rights, including torture, imprisonment without trial, disappearances and extrajudicial killings. Amnesty International has documented the situation throughout the period and concluded in a substantial report published in 1985: "Indonesian forces in the territory have systematically and persistently engaged in cruel and brutal conduct constituting serious violations of human rights." (1985 Report, p.10.)

Fear and mistrust have come to govern the lives of the population, which for more than a decade, has been virtually isolated from the world. Within Timor itself, people are not able to travel at will, to correspond or telephone unhindered, or engage in normal economic activity. They cannot trust one another or speak freely. Individuals suspected of sympathising with those who continue to resist Indonesia's rule are punished by death and torture as well as arrest and detention.

"In the interior, in many villages and concentration camps, the people lack the conditions of life to enable them to survive as a people. If you go through the villages of Luro, Laivai, Tutuala, Iliomar, Uatolari, Cajularan, Lacluta etc., you will see that the people live in a state of permanent encirclement. They are not allowed to go more than three kilometres outside their villages. In addition they always have to have a 'pass' issued by the Indonesian military authorities. It happens easily that East Timorese are accused of having contacts with the guerillas, and then they immediately become victims of torture, massacres, etc. The people live in huts, but at night they are forced to sleep in ditches inside and outside of the hut. The people live in constant fear ..." (Excerpt from a private letter, dated February 20 1986, to Mgr. da Costa Lopes, Apostolic Administrator in Dili Diocese between 1977 and 1983).

There are enormous humanitarian and social problems as a result of the ongoing conflict. Families have been destroyed by killings and forced population movements. The Governor of East Timor, Mario Carrascalao, stated recently that in areas for which information is available there are currently 20,000 orphans, 13,000 widows and 7,000 old and infirm people all in need of care.

Families have been separated. The best documented case is that of the offshore island of Atauro, where several thousand people were taken from their villages and held for some years, before being moved to other areas, often distant from their original communities.

Health services are virtually non-existent in the countryside, and in the towns, medicines are too expensive for the majority of Timorese. There are fewer health centres than birth control centres. There have been many protests about the birth control programme implemented by the Indonesian government. Mgr. Belo and Mgr. da Costa Lopes both criticised its non-voluntary character and the resort to sterilisation without informing those concerned.

Schools were destroyed and teachers and pupils dispersed. The Indonesian government has built many schools since, but the introduction of the Indonesian language and Indonesian values and culture into schools remains a matter of contention because of the general political environment. Many Timorese believe that their language and culture are being discouraged or suppressed.

Economic Development.
There is indeed a need to develop East Timor economically. Timor's people received little benefit from the long period of Portuguese colonial rule.

Now the war has done immense damage to the territory's infrastructure, administration and traditional organisation.

Timor was sacked during the invasion. The Timorese are still suffering the aftermath. In addition, the Indonesian government is implementing its transmigration policy in East Timor, offering immigrants from Java, Bali and other parts of Indonesia, loans and assistance which are not made available to Timorese. Indonesian rather than Timorese officials occupy the most senior government posts.

This is placing Timorese in a relation of dependence, so that, in the words of Mgr. Belo, they are becoming second-class citizens in their own country.

The counterinsurgency policies especially affect the civilian population. Numerous agricultural communities have been moved to new villages under military surveillance. This policy has paralysed subsistence agriculture, upon which the great majority of the population depended.

Those who continue to farm are unable to sell their crops. In particular, coffee the only significant export, is bought at very low prices by an Indonesian company which has a trading monopoly.

The Indonesian government's current economic policies give priority to the production of export crops and plantation agriculture. They do not take account of the needs of the population, and more especially those of the poorest and most deprived. Such policies cannot result in true development.

Political Issues.
It has become clear that there is no likelihood that either side will win a military victory. This makes a political solution all the more necessary.

After Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975, the United Nations condemned Indonesia's actions and called upon the parties to settle the dispute by negotiation.
The Resolution, passed in 1982, which is still in force, recognises 'the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and other relevant United Nations resolutions' the General Assembly asked the Secretary General "to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem".

Portugal's role at this time is especially important, at the diplomatic level, because it is recognised by the international community to be the Administering Power in the territory. This status engages Portugal's responsibility to seek, through the international community, a solution that will clearly respect the rights of the people of its ex-colony.

It is nevertheless the Indonesian government which at this stage holds the power to permit or prevent progress. We appeal to the Indonesian government to show wisdom and find a path to a settlement which will permit the people of East Timor to exercise a real choice with regard to their future. In our view, this is the only way to secure a settled political relationship with East Timor, or long-term peace in the region.

It is necessary to consult the people.
In view of the profound mistrust generated by what has taken place, we believe it would be unacceptable to ask any of the parties engaged in the conflict to organise the consultation of Timorese opinion. Only an electoral process internationally organised and supervised will ensure that East Timor's people express their wishes freely and fully exercise the right to self determination. For the process to have meaning, representatives of East Timorese opinion must take part.

People's rights.
There is a need to preserve people's rights in the territory, including the right to life, as well as protection against political violence or abuses. We applaud the work of organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the local Catholic church and condemn the restriction placed on their activity, as well as any attempt to exploit their presence for political ends.

We support the efforts of development agencies to provide support to the people of East Timor as they try to develop their territory; their support must be seen to reach the very poor.

True development requires openness and participation: it cannot be said to take place when policies to generate economic growth are implemented by force, operate at the expense of the local population being no benefit to the poor and disadvantaged, or add exclusively to the wealth of the elites. Indonesian and European development organisations recognise this: "A development strategy based on the denial of either civil or political rights or both, not only violates international human rights standards, but is also a negative of the very concept of development." (Submission to Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI) by the Inter-NGO Group on IGGI Matters, April 1986).

Access.

In both these areas of endeavour, the alleviation of poverty and the alleviation of suffering as a result of the war, we reaffirm the importance of opening the territory to contact with the outside world.

Access is currently restricted to a few selected observers who visit the territory under tightly controlled conditions, and to a small number of humanitarian aid organisations. Such limited access can only undermine the Indonesian government's claim to have secured Timorese support for integration.

The Church in East Timor.

It is the responsibility of Christian leaders to be with their people, and we are in solidarity with Mgr. Belo and the Church in East Timor in their attempts to be with the people of East Timor.

We recognise that the Indonesian churches find themselves in a delicate and difficult situation. We nonetheless consider it essential that they should allow the local church to decide its own status.

In our opinion religious liberty must include the freedom to worship in accordance with local traditions, the right of ministers to visit parishioners in all parts of the territory, and the right of churches to run their own educational and humanitarian institutions. The local church must have the right to invite foreign missionaries to work in the territory.

Conclusions.

In describing the situation in East Timor as we have done here, we are expressing our thoughts and feelings as Christians, aware that we all belong to the same human family and desiring true fellowship with members of other religions.

We recognise that in the past, our churches have often forsaken their true responsibilities. This was especially true during the period when our countries were colonising powers. We feel nonetheless that this should not prevent us from speaking out forcefully on the situation which currently prevails in East Timor.

As Christians involved in promoting peace and justice, our concern is above all for the lives and suffering of the people of East Timor. It must be acknowledged, since extreme suffering over so many years has not broken the will to resist, that military force will not solve this conflict. Lasting reconciliation will only emerge out of a just settlement, through negotiations in which representatives of the Timorese people have taken part.

We are challenged by the cry of Timor's people. Brothers and sisters in the churches of Asia, let us carry together our share of responsibility for the tragedy which has overtaken East Timor.

In this speech by Bishop Patelisio Finau of Tonga to the United Nations Decolonisation Committee he critically examines the Indonesian occupation of Timor. It is a powerful speech on behalf of the Pacific Conference of Churches. He looks at the Churches' response to East Timor and a tradition of social teaching that demands Timor's development.

The sudden death of Bishop Patelesio Finau, Bishop of Tonga, shocked many people, including those who had heard him speak in September, 1993 during his visit to Australia to promote awareness on Pacific isues.

Bishop Finau, aged 59, died suddenly on October 4th, 1993 in Niue where he was attending the Pacific Conference of Churches' Executive Committee meeting.

Ordained Bishop of Tonga in 1972, Bishop Finau was well known throughout the Pacific as a keen ecumenist. His appointment as President of the Pacific Conference of Churches, a position he held at his death, is testimony to his strong wish to bring the churches into closer collaboration.

Bishop Finau's last visit to Australia, at the invitation of the Paulian Association, saw him continuing to champion the cause of human rights, especially for the people of East Timor and Bougainville.

Calling Australia the "big brother" of the Pacific, he stressed the part Australia could play in influencing respect for the rights of Pacific people. He expressed disappointment that the Australian Government seemed disinclined to take up the cause of self-determination for people in East Timor and Bougianville.

STATEMENT TO THE UN DECOLONISATION COMMITTEE SESSION ON EAST TIMOR, New York, 12 August 1988.

Bishop Finau.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, thank you for this opportunity to speak on the East Timor question which for many years has been a deep concern of the Pacific Conference of Churches whom I am representing today.

My name is Patelisio Finau. I am the Catholic Bishop of Tonga. May I observe at the outset that though my country is significantly smaller than East Timor in terms of land area and population size, Tonga is an independent nation and one of the few island peoples in the South Pacific region never to have been colonised. As a Tongan, therefore, I have little sympathy for those who would argue that micro-states such as East Timor, are inherently unviable and have no future except as part of a larger entity.

The Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) comprises the major Christian Churches in the Islands of the Pacific. The peoples I represent live in an area from Marquesas and French Polynesia in the east to New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea in the west; from the Cook Islands and Tonga in the south to the Islands of Micronesia in the north, reaching the Mariana Islands. PCC is served by a secretariat located in Fiji. In 1985, the Conference endorsed an international declaration on East Timor which was signed by 427 Parliamentarians and, amongst others, by 109 Church organisations from Asia and the Pacific. The Declaration called for direct negotiations with the people of East Timor including those who resist Indonesian occupation, an end to hostilities, independent access to the territory, and an act of self-determination 'free from interference and verified by international observers acceptable to the East Timorese people'. I too endorsed this declaration along with several of my Episcopal colleagues in the South Pacific.

At the last General Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches, held in Western Somoa in September 1986 and attended by 200 participants, a strongly worded resolution on East Timor was adopted. The three main clauses of this resolution read as follows:-

'The Conference affirms the rights of the East Timorese to full recognition of their sovereignty as an independent nation and condemns the Indonesian Government for illegal occupation of East Timor.'

'It strongly condemns the Australian Labor Party and Australian Government for recently changing their policy of supporting the self-determination of the East Timorese.'

'The Conference calls on all Pacific people and their governments to support the East Timorese in their struggle for self-determination and independence and in particular to ensure that East Timor remains on the United Nations agenda as a priority.'

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, concern over East Timor has not been limited to Churches in the vicinity of East Timor. Church leaders and organisations in many parts of the world such as Portugal, the United States, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Japan, and Hong Kong - to name some, have also repeatedly spoken out moved by compassion for the suffering in East Timor and, in many cases, by profound dismay at the failure of the international system to redress the injustices which lie at the root of the conflict.

East Timor also remains an issue for the Holy See. In December last year Pope John Paul II reaffirmed his continued concern in a statement delivered in the presence of Indonesia's new ambassador to the Vatican, Roni Hendrawan Kurniadi. The Pope told the ambassador, and by extension the Indonesian Government, that **'The Church's universal mission of service leads her to hope that particular consideration will be given to the protection of the ethnic, religious, and cultural character of the people of East Timor'**. It is significant that this appeal repeated almost exactly remarks he made on a similar occasion two years earlier in July 1984.

Through the Holy Father did not explicitly identify the threat to the 'ethnic, religious and cultural character of the people of East Timor' that prompted his admonition, there is no doubt in my mind that such a threat exists in East Timor and has already eroded Timorese traditions and identity. It is embodied in the heavy weight of the Indonesian military, administrative and commercial presence and brought to bear heavily on this small society through the resettlement of Indonesian transmigrants, an extensive education system targeting the young and in other ways such as the propagation of Indonesian values and culture through the Indonesian controlled media.

In view of the nature and rationale of Indonesian's takeover of East Timor, it is difficult to believe that Indonesia's military places much positive value on 'things Timorese' for their own sake. One must anticipate, sadly, that the absorption or Indonesianisation of East Timor is ultimately intended to be complete - militarily, politically, economically and culturally.

Against this background, the Pope's appeals deserve our closest attention. His appeals have clearly been made on behalf of the local Church of East Timor whose people are feeling integrationist pressures intensely. One may question whether cultural self-determination can be achieved where political self-determination and basic rights are denied. However, in a tight situation where real options are few and far between, the Timorese Church believes it has a particular vocation at this point of time to resist the Pope and, hopefully, the international community generally. Nothing less than the soul of East Timor is at stake.

This struggle for cultural survival is a mission the Pacific Conference of Churches wishes to support whole-heartedly. I would like to urge the United Nations to devote more attention to this neglected but crucial aspect of the broader issue.

Indonesian officials reacted defensively to the Pope's admonition and I would like now to make some observations about their reactions as they were reported in the Djakarta press.

In the first place, Indonesian spokesmen tried to discredit the Pope by claiming that he was poorly informed on the reality in East Timor and that he had listened to the wrong people. In response it should be pointed out that the Pope's informants are in fact the people of East Timor themselves, most of whom belong to the Catholic Church which is established in every district of East Timor and accountable directly to the Vatican. Pope John Paul II, is in fact, one of the best informed world leaders on this issue.

For his part, Indonesia's then Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar, complained that the Pope 'would commend Indonesia if he knew what we did for the Catholic Church in East Timor' adding (to quote his words) that 'those who were heathen and animist before have become Catholics'.

It is true that the Catholic population of East Timor has doubled since Indonesia's takeover. However, this remarkable phenomenon has been due, not to any benign policy on the part of Indonesia's military, as Dr Mochtar has sought to suggest, but to the deeply unsettling and traumatic circumstances surrounding Indonesia's violent occupation. Beset by war, hunger, and aggressive foreign presence, the people turned to the Church en masse for assistance, protection and as a vehicle to represent their concerns and aspirations. The weak and oppressed found a voice in the Church. With the assistance of the international Church, including in particular the Indonesian Catholic Church, the local Church has been able to respond to these enormous challenges, justly earning widespread admiration for its work.

The Church's role in East Timor is an important one. However, it suffers from the enforced isolation which afflicts East Timor as a whole due to Indonesian control. This enforced isolation obstructs the free flow of personnel, ideas, resources and skills. The Church in East Timor would be greatly assisted in its service of the people if a measure of 'glasnost' were permitted allowing free interaction with the international Church community. Unlike the situation in the South Pacific where such relationships are taken for granted and encouraged, no such contact is possible for the Church of Timor.

A third Indonesian reaction to the Papal statement of last December was that the Pope was not well informed about the development that has taken place in East Timor under Indonesia, the implication being that his remarks should have been qualified by this acknowledgment.

While not wishing to deny that many changes are to be seen in East Timor in the form of new buildings, roads and other facilities, these projects do not of themselves constitute 'development' for the Pope. According to Church teaching, real development is as much about human rights as it is about bricks and mortar or even the satisfaction of basic needs. Pope John Paul's recent encyclical Sollicitudo Rei Socialis has this to say about poverty:-

> **'In today's world there are many forms of poverty .... the denial or the limitation of human rights - as, for example, the right to religious freedom, the right to share in the building of society, the freedom to organise and to form unions or to take initiatives in economic matters - do these not impoverish the human person as much as, if not more than, the deprivation of material goods? And is development which does not take into account the full affirmation of these rights really development on the human level?'**

Evaluated in these terms the development of East Timor under Indonesia leaves much to be desired as basic freedoms are not respected. What evidence is there in contemporary East Timor of, for example, the right to organise, to form unions, to share in the building of society the Timorese envisaged for themselves in 1975?

The people of East Timor do not prefer having more things to being less human. Their cry is for freedom and they will not sell their soul as a people for any material gain.

The inadequacy of Indonesia's official development program is even more apparent when judged against the two standards which the United Nations regards as basic to genuine development. These two essentials are the right to self-determination and the right to participate. Article 1 of the UN Declaration on the right to development states **'The human right to development also implies the full realisation of peoples to self-determination which includes the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their national wealth and resources.'**

Would anyone argue that the Timorese people are exercising their right to full sovereignty over all their national wealth and resources?

The second essential emphasised by the UN as integral to development is the right to popular participation. Article 2 of the UN Declaration on the right to development just quoted states: **'The human person is the central subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development.'** The reality in East Timor is, I fear, that the economy is monopolised by and geared to an Indonesian elite, not the Timorese people, and that the state machinery prevents the Timorese from meaningful participation.

I submit that it is on the basis of these agreed fundamentals that the reality in East Timor must be assessed and addressed.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, in this necessarily brief statement I have sought to focus on the people of East Timor and their needs and rights. In the realpolitik world of international diplomacy and the often unscrupulous pursuit of self-interest by nation states, there is always the danger that the people will be sacrificed and ignored.

Like the Church in East Timor our first concern must be to listen to the people, to identify their concerns and aspirations and to respond courageously and creatively in solidarity with them. Their priority concerns can be summed up as the quest for cultural, economic and political self-determination, that is, the freedom to be Timorese in their own way in their own land. These priorities must be our priorities.

As my brother Bishops of the Indonesian Catholic Church stated in their letter to the East Timor Church, of November 17, 1983 **'peace is an enterprise of justice not merely the absence of war or something brought about by dictatorship'.**In partnership with them I too pray that the Church in East Timor will remain 'in the vanguard' in this search, 'holding strong' until justice is attained. Without the active support of the international community, however, this search is doomed to frustration and possible failure.

In conclusion, therefore, I strongly urge this United Nations Committee and the UN Secretary-General in particular to make the advancement of the Timorese people's interests and inalienable rights your priority objective and over-riding concern in all future activities on the question.

A Portuguese Church leader issued a strong appeals to the international Church 'to shout out good and loud, today more than ever before' in defence of the basic rights of the East Timorese people. His spirited call was delivered to the Fourth Christian Consultation on East Timor held in Portugal, 22-24 January, 1988.

Dom. Manuel Martins, Bishop of Setubal, Portugal.

"We did not come here for a friends' get-together, but came with two deeply human and very noble objectives. On the one hand we want to share in the suffering of a people, gagged body and soul but which the iniquitous force of cruelty has not managed to kill. On the other hand we want to shout out good and loud - because the noise of economic and political interests is loud itself - and say to the civilised world that this cannot go on. This inhuman and shameful situation has lasted long enough.

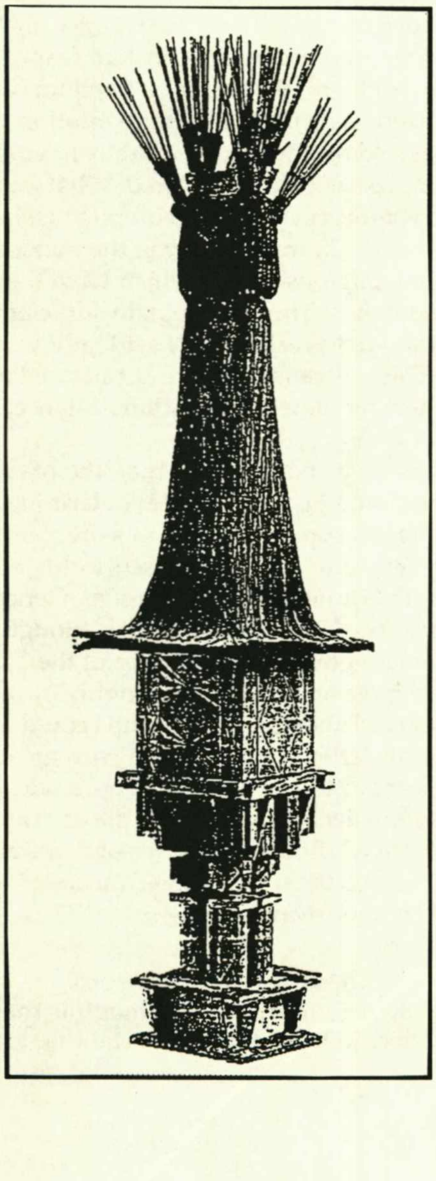
I will underline, if I may, a few points which I consider to be very important. In the first place, peoples are like individuals: they have basic rights which should be respected and promoted by all other peoples. These rights are designed by race, origin, history, religion, by tradition and common experience, by the projects which they live and dream and by suffering. And all this creates its own physiognomy which characterises and distinguishes a people.

In the second place, we cannot allow economic or political interests to govern the relationship between peoples. The true civilisation is that in which man is the centre and the criterion of its concerns. And when I say man I also say, with the same truth and force, people.

In the third place, a society, people, country languishes, loses its reasons to really live when it becomes insensitive in the face of violation of these values, and even more so if that society or country is connected in some way, structurally, with the people whose values are in question and under aggression.

Finally, peace is not built by force, because justice is not built by injustice. What I mean is that peace is not the same as a fait accompli situation: East Timor, claimed by Indonesia as its 27th Province.

Timor cannot die. Timor is a people, different from any other, with a past, present and future. With a history. Timor, the heroic people of Timor, has fought even with its own blood in order to preserve its identity, its physiognomy, its truth. No one of goodwill can allow it to stand alone. It is necessary to shout together louder: today, more than ever before. It is our shouting which makes the powerful tremble most. If we keep quiet, Timor will eventually die, but the sin will remain with us."



RESPONSES TO BISHOP BELO'S LETTER OF 1989 TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR A REFERENDUM

This letter to the Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Asia-Pacific Region by Bishop Soma of Japan asks for the International Church to support Bishop Belo's request of the UN to hold a Referendum. It is a letter of a strong call to stand in solidarity with the East Timorese in their struggle for Justice. The letter is followed by Bishop Soma's statement to the UN in 1989.
5 Cardinals, 32 Archbishops, 77 Bishops and 1359 other Church leaders signed the accompanying letter to the UN Secretary-General.

Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of the Asia-Pacific Region,

I address this letter to you out of deep concern for the suffering faithfuls in East Timor, and to ask your support for their courageous spiritual leader, Bishop Carlos Filipe S. Belo. East Timor has been isolated from the rest of the world since 1975 when the land was invaded by Indonesian troops. Ignored by the world, the people have been subjected to every kind of brutality in the intervening years, and tens of thousands have been killed. The voice of the East Timorese Church has, however, from time to time reached us and called on us to share the suffering of the people who have been decimated, uprooted and forced to submit to alien rule.

Although the Catholics in East Timor were a minority of the population before the invasion, now over 90% of the people embrace the Catholic Faith. The reason is simple: the church has stood beside the people in their suffering and has understood the longing of the people to live in peace, freedom and dignity.

Recently an important letter by Bishop Belo was brought to my attention. The letter addressed to the United Nations Secretary General, Dr Javier Perez de Cuellar, (a copy is enclosed). As the religious leader of the people, as one of the people, the Bishop makes a simple and dignified appeal to the head of the United Nations to allow, in the form of a referendum, the people of East Timor to exercise their right to choose their own fate. Concerned parties on the international level have noted the importance of this letter as being the most explicit expression to date of the position of the East Timorese Church.

It is my humble opinion that by giving this letter our support we can, in however a small way, stand beside our brothers and sisters in East Timor in their appeal for peace and justice. Indeed, as leaders of the church in the Asia-Pacific region, I humbly believe that we have a special responsibility to offer our voices for the church and people of East Timor.

Motivated by these considerations, I am preparing to attend the United Nations Decolonization Committee hearing on East Timor at the UN headquarters this August. My purpose will be to give full support to Bishop Belo's appeal to the United Nations to allow the East Timorese to exercise their right of self-determination. At the same time, I would like to present to Secretary General Dr Perez de Cuellar a letter of support for Bishop Belo, from the bishops of the Asia-Pacific region in particular.

I would like to ask you to read Bishop Belo's letter and to sign the letter of support (enclosed).

May I ask you to do this at your earliest convenience and to return the signed letter to me so that I have it no later than the end of July.

Finally I ask your prayers for the faithful of East Timor.

STATEMENT TO UN DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE SESSION ON EAST TIMOR

NEW YORK, 14 AUGUST 1989

BISHOP ALOISIUS NOBUO SOMA

Honourable Chairman and Delegates,

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for all the endeavors made by this Committee in order to bring about a peaceful settlement to the cause of East Timor. I am here, representing the Japanese Catholic Council for Justice and Peace. One of the deep concerns of our council is East Timor.

I must, however, confess that it was only a few years ago that our council began to realize the grim reality of this suffering people as it is, especially through the visit to Japan of the previous ecclesiastical leader of East Timor, Mgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes. Regrettably, this lack of understanding exists not only in the Church of Japan but in many other Churches all over Asia.

"Why is it?" I asked myself, and then I realized that Indonesia had successfully kept even its neighboring Asian countries totally uninformed about the East Timor devastation.

Regarding the question of getting information on East Timor, our council has great esteem for the Japanese East Timor solidarity groups with whom we form the Free East Timor Japan Coalition. Their fervent activities have always been a source of inspiration to our council, and I owe, to some exent, this opportunity of my attending this Committee, to their humanitarian enthusiasm.

Even since we became aware of what was happening in East Timor, we tried our best to understand the essence of this tragedy. And in this process it became apparent that this occurence is not simply a war, but it is a clear case of genocide in which no less than one third of the whole population has perished. And our regret for East Timor becomes more profound when we direct our attention to the close commercial partnership between Indonesia and Japan. It is now a known fact that part of Japanese financial aid to Indonesia is spent to oppress the Timorese movement for freedom and peace. We, as Japanese citizens, acutely feel the need to make reparation for this economic-dominated mentality of Japan.

My desire to take decisive action for East Timor was highly stimulated when I heard from a person who had recently entered East Timor that, even today, the Timorese live in constant fear of the Indonesian military; their right to freedom cannot at all be exercised; they take the situation of East Timor as a state of war and naturally have a strong wish for a ceasefire to be declared. What impressed this person deeply was the complete isolation of the Timorese Church. Not even the major superiors of the religious orders which have their communities in East Timor can obtain sufficient information about the real state of East Timor when they visit it. This is because they are not allowed to move without being under military surveillance.

Actually, it was nothing less than the brave letter of the reverend Bishop Belo that determined me to throw my full support behind this problem in East Timor. This letter was addressed to Mr Perez de Cuellar, the United Nations Secretary General, last February. The letter was more than enough for me to understand the real aspirations of the Timorese people. I have always thought highly of the leadership of the Timorese Church, and I could not help reading the letter of Bishop Belo with great admiration. I recall the impressive words said by this same Bishop five years ago, and I quote: "I am ready to be removed if this is the price of defending human rights and the rights of the Timorese. The truth should be published."

Honorable Chairman and Delegates, let us heed Bishop Belo's letter. Let us imagine that he is present here in front of us and is talking to us on behalf of all the Timorese. He says: "It is important that East Timor should not be forgotten." This cry reminds me of the duty or mission of us Church members, which is described in the letter of Pope John Paul II titled, "To Build Peace, Respect Minorities." The Pope says: "As members of the one family of God we can tolerate no division nor discrimination in our midst ... Jesus came that 'all may have life and have it abundantly' (Jn 10:10). No person, no group is excluded from this mission of unifying love which has now been entrusted to us." Genuine unity is not brought about by force, it is established on the respect for the right to life and the right to freedom. The above-mentioned cry of Bishop Belo reminds me also of the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations, which states: "We...determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...to reaffirm faith in... the equal right of...nations large and small... to promote social progress and better standards of life in wider freedom." Who on earth can deny that East Timor is one of the nations which is in urgent need of this spirit of the Charter?

Bishop Belo's letter continues: "The people of Timor must be consulted on the future of our land... Until now, the people have not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people. Indonesia says that the people of East Timor have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor themselves have never said this." This is another call to the United Nations which has the duty and mission to persuade the antagonists to sit together to talk in order to bring peace. Here let me dare to propose immediate action for the dispatch of a United Nations Inquiry Commission to East Timor. I consider that it is high time to adopt drastic measures if we really want peace in East Timor.

The last and main point of the Bishop's letter is: "...to ask the Secretary General to start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonization, i.e., the holding of a referendum." Personally I think it one of the most solemn objectives of the United Nations to decolonize nations under colonial control. East Timor, which is illegally occupied by Indonesia, remains a colony according to International Law. Therefore, if the United Nations does not exert itself to the utmost in order to comply with Bishop Belo's most legitimate claim, and start all the necessary procedures for a referendum to be held, our every hope and expectation towards the United Nations will end up in grave despair. I pray in a very special way that the members of this Committee will be as brave as Bishop Belo in confronting all the imaginable pressures from the so-called big countries.

Honorable Chairman and Delegates, I address the final part of my statement to each of you on behalf of all the Church leaders and members throughout Asia and Oceania who have expressed their deepest anxieties for our sisters and brothers in East Timor. It is indeed with great pleasure that I can present here in support of Bishop Belo's letter more than 1,250 signatures which I received from Asia-Oceania Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, priests, sisters and many faithful who were so eager to join the Church leaders in expressing solidarity with the Timorese people. Among these signatures there are some from other regions of the world as well. What does this great number of signatures mean? What all these signatures manifest is: EAST TIMOR IS NOT FORGOTTEN. There is a growing concern and commitment for this cause.

Honorable Chairman and Delegates, let me tell you what I heard from a very reliable source. The Indonesian authorities are arresting Timorese Community leaders on suspicion of having signed a statement to support the letter of Bishop Belo to the United Nations Secretary General. With deep sorrow for this type of conduct by the Indonesian Government and a firm belief in the Timorese aspirations for self-determination, I once again plead with you to take into serious consideration what Bishop Belo points out in his letter.

Before concluding my speech, let me convey my sincere appreciation and expectations to my dear Indonesian Church leaders, with some of whom I enjoy close friendship. The Bishops of the Indonesian Catholic Church have been trying in a very difficult situation, to be good partners in faith with those suffering brothers and sisters in East Timor. I hope you too, will continue to increase your solidarity with the Timorese Church.

It is necessary, however, for men and women of all religious beliefs, and most especially, the members of this body, to urge the Indonesian Government to remain faithful to its supreme principles, and find a just solution to the East Timor situation which can be embraced by both the Indonesians and the people of East Timor.

Thank you.
Aloisius Nobuo Soma, Bishop of Nagoya

Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands are the closest neighbours to East Timor. Their representation on behalf of East Timor has been a significant act in solidarity. This letter of support to Bishop Belo supports the people of East Timor.

4th October, 1989.

Most Rev. Carlos Filipe Belo, SDB
Camara Ecclesiastica
DILI
East Timor, Indonesia.

Dear Bishop Belo,

The National Board of the Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands at its Meeting recently in Port Moresby directed me to convey to you and the Church in East Timor, our concern at the situation in East Timor and support for the efforts of the Church.

For some years we have followed the situation in East Timor with concern and sorrow. We continue to receive reports which indicate that there is no lessening in the disregard for human rights nor the destruction of the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of your people. We are aware of our proximity to East Timor. In Papua New Guinea, we put great value on our land, our ways of being and seeing the world, and our independence. This lies at the heart of what we call our Melanesian identity. Therefore, we feel strongly about attempts made through military force to disregard these, and to dominate, oppress and destroy the indentity of our neighbours, the people of East Timor.

However, we feel deep appreciation of the efforts by you, and the Church in East Timor to be with the people, and to condemn attempts made to destroy the indentity of your people. We recognize that this has brought considerable difficulties and suffering for the Church in East Timor. But, we have the greatest admiration for your courage and determination in defence of your people, and in advocating a just and right solution for peace in East Timor.

We trust that the forthcoming visit of Pope John Paul to Dili will bring consolation and encouragement to the Church in East Timor, and that the Holy Father will again repeat the Holy See's concern for Justice, human rights and the identity of the people of East Timor.

We are aware that earlier this year you wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations requesting him to start the process for a referendum to allow the Timorese people to vote on their future. We are aware that the Timorese people have not had the opportunity to participate in the internationally recognized right of self determination, and thereby to express their ideas and desires without pressure and without force.

We support your efforts to achieve this, and we will continue to press for a just and proper solution to your situation when such opportunities arise in Papua New Guinea. We will continue to ask our Government not to ignore the situation in East Timor, to take a more active role in the United Nations when the issue of East Timor arises, and to use the opportunities it has in its relationship with the Indonesian Government to voice the concern of Church bodies for the humanitarian needs of our neighbours in East Timor. Last year, the Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands had an opportunity to express its concerns through a representative to the UN Decolonization Committee Meeting, who spoke in favour of an act of self determination for the Timorese people.

We remain open, Bishop, to suggestions regarding further assistance that we might render in order that we be, more effectively, in solidarity with the Church in East Timor. We hope that an opportunity arises for you to visit us. We would warmly welcome you and host you in terms of arranging for you to brief the National Board of the Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development on the situation in East Timor.

In conclusion, we ask that you convey our concern, support and admiration to the priests, religious and laity of the Church in East Timor. We hope and pray that the time ahead for you, the Church and the people of East Timor will be of increasing justice, freedom and hope.

> ***"All people have the right to self-determination."***
> - UN Declaration on Colonialism

The Canadian Bishops joined in another campaign based in Europe to support Bishop Belo's request for a referendum.

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
Conference des eveques catholiques du Canada

East Timor

The Canadian bishops have been invited to express their support and solidarity for the people of Timor and their struggle for independence.

East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, occupied and administered by the government of Indonesia (with whom the Canadian government has diplomatic and economic relations), has a very low profile in the news these days.

From the start of the occupation, people of Timor have demanded the right to self-determination.

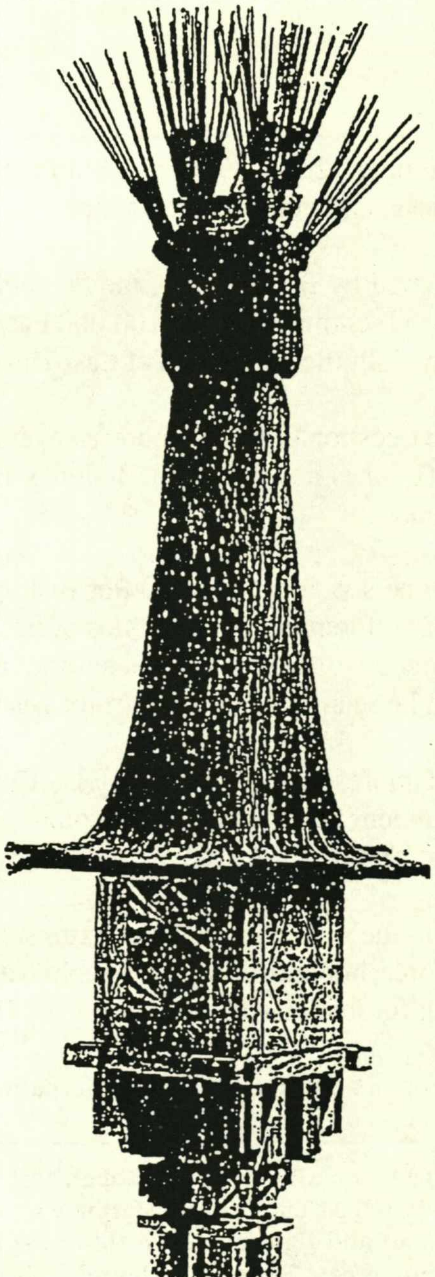
In solidarity with his people, Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, SDB, Apostolic Administrator of Dili, has appealed to the UN Secretary General, Dr Javier Perez de Cuellar, to "start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonisation, i.e., the holding of a referendum" (letter dated February 6, 1989).

In keeping with the initiatives taken by other Asian church leaders, Bishop Manuel de Silva Martins, Bishop of Setubal, Portugal and President of Pax Christi-Portugal, invites the bishops to sign the enclosed letter to the Secretary General of the UN supporting Bishop Belo's request.

Last March, Bishop Brendan O'Brien, Co-Chairman of the CCCB Human Rights Committee, wrote to Bishop Belo expressing our solidarity.

The CCCB Human Rights Committee

July 4, 1990.



CHAPTER FOUR

The Papal Visit

On October 12th 1989, Pope John Paul II made an historic visit to East Timor as part of a tour of Indonesia and other Asian countries.

Welcomed by Bishop Belo, the Pope met with the priests and nuns of East Timor and celebrated Mass at Tacitolu with over 100,000 East Timorese Catholics. Although it was a pastoral visit to the largely Catholic population of East Timor, speculation of the political implications were inevitable.

As the question of East Timorese sovereignty is still disputed by the United Nations, the Church in East Timor is not part of the Indonesian Bishops Conference, but is administered directly by the Vatican.

The Pope's visit came soon after Bishop Belo's call to the United Nations Secretary General for a popular referendum on the status of East Timor. Bishop Belo and the Catholic church had suffered prolonged isolation and repeated intimidation by the military. Many people hoped that the visit would be seen as papal support for Bishop Belo and his stand for human rights and justice.

East Timorese people both in East Timor and outside, held strong concerns that the Indonesian government would politically exploit the papal visit to attract international recognition of its claim to East Timor.

Prior to the visit, thousands of extra soldiers were sent to East Timor to back up the existing military force in controlling the people. At the conclusion of Mass, a group of young people began calling for justice and more freedom. They were immediately suppressed by security forces.

The Pope is the first and only international head of state to visit East Timor.

The Pope's homily on 12th October, 1989 during his visit to East Timor links Matthew's gospel of being salt and light of the world to the current situation of East Timor. The homily talks of reconciliation and yet acknowledges the great sacrifice of people.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

"You are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world" (Mt 5:13-14).

These are the words of Jesus to his first disciples. And today the Bishop of Rome addresses them to you, Christ's disciples *in East Timor, in the Diocese of Dili.* Through these words we are united in a common vocation; from them we learn what it means to live as Christians.

As Bishop of Rome and the Successor of Saint Peter, I make these words my greeting to all who are gathered here from Dili, from Atambua and from Kupang. I offer greetings to the Apostolic Adminstrator of Dili, Bishop Belo, to Bishops Pain Ratu and Manteiro, and to all the clergy, religious and laity of the diocese of Timor.

Many of you have made long and difficult journeys from your villages in both East and West Timor to be with the Pope, I thank you all, especially those who have worked to make this occasion possible.

Dear brothers and sisters; Peter's special ministry to "strengthen his brethren" has brought me to East Timor today. It was to Peter that Christ said before the Passion; "when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren" (Lk 22:32). During the Master's Passion Peter had been weak, but the Lord called him, nevertheless, to shepherd the flock (cf. Jn 21:15-19) and for this he gave him a special grace to become "light" and "salt" in the service of all who believe in Christ. *I come to you as a witness* of Christ and an elder in the family of the faith (cf. 1 Pet 5:1). From the very beginning of my pontificate I have followed your situation with deep concern. It has long been my wish to express to you that the whole Church, and the Pope in a particular way, holds you in esteem and in affection. Now I am filled with joy at being able to celebrate this Eucharist with you here at Tasi-Tolu.

What does it mean to be "the salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" in East Timor today? For many years now, you have experienced destruction and death as a result of conflict; you have known what it means to be victims of hatred and struggle. Many innocent people have died, while others have been prey to retaliation and revenge. For too long you have been suffering a lack of stability which has rendered your future uncertain. This distressing situation causes economic difficulties which, in spite of some relief, still exist, preventing the development needed to alleviate the burdern which still weighs hardly on the population.

Respect for the rights which render life more human must be firmly ensured; the rights of individuals and the rights of families. I pray that those who have responsibility for life in East Timor will act with wisdom and good will towards all, as they search for a just and peaceful resolution of present difficulties in order to bring about a speedy*improvement of conditions of life* which will permit you to live in social harmony, according to your own traditions and requirements, in serene and fruitful productivity.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ; Who will be the salt that preserves life in the midst of death,*if not you?* Who will be a light that radiates wisdom in the midst of darkness, *if not you* who have remained steadfast in the faith since the Gospel was first preached here four centuries ago? Your land is much in need of Christian healing and reconciliation. But the ecclesial community itself must be a reconciled community if it is to fulfil the important role that springs from Christ's words; "you are the salt...you are the light". It is not always easy to find the courage, determination and patience needed for reconciliation. Yet we know in faith that *love transcends every boundary*between nations, peoples, and cultures. No matter what the differences, no matter what the grievances or injuries, we who are Christ's followers must take to heart his words; *Forgive, and you will be forgiven"* (Lk 6:37); *"Love your enemies* and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44).

You who are *Catholics* in East Timor have a tradition in which family life, education and social customs are deeply rooted in the Gospel, and this tradition is a great part of your identity. Yours is a tradition imbued with the teachings and spirit of *the Beatitudes,* one of humble trust in God, of mercy and forgiveness, and, when necessary, of patient suffering in time of trial (cf. Mt 5:3-10). There are situations in which the ecclesial community needs to be specially capable of *living the evangelical message of love and reconciliation.* The strength to do so comes from interior conversion. Only when we are reborn in the Spirit do we understand the force of the Gospel words: "Blessed are the meek... Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness... Blessed are the peacemakers..." (ibid, vv. 5, 6, 9). The call to be "salt" and "light" is no easy task. It is nothing less than the call to fully "mature in Christ" (Col 1:28).

Furthermore, your parishes, your catechesis, your Catholic schools, your small communities and other forms of association, all have a role to play in educating for a *strong family life* which respects God's plan for life and love, for honesty and competence in the world of work and public affairs, for virtue and goodness in all areas of human endeavour. You must show yourselves worthy of your *Christian calling,* which is a call to holiness, to prayer, to the practice of the sacraments and to the self-sacrifice without which discipleship is impossible. I urge you to persevere in your calling. I exhort you all to live "in the bond of peace", in union with the Pope and with the Apostolic Administrator and priests of your diocese, who have been so generous in their work in these difficult years. The Lord who sees and knows all things will reward the Religious Brothers and Sisters, and those members of the laity who have been specially committed to serving the needs of others. A special word of esteem must go to the valiant missionaries who have stayed near to the people in the most trying moments of your recent history, bearing witness to the love that they have for the Church, for the pilgrim People of God in Timor.

I am aware that the theme for your weekly Holy Hours in preparation for my visit has been: *"NEON IDA DEIT, LARA NIDA DEIT"* (cf. Acts 4:32). These words indicate the path which the Church in Dili must follow in order to respond to the special challenges of today. Unity in faith, expressed and nourished especially in Eucharistic Communion, will lead you to a communion of charity and solidarity with others, and will help you to *live the evangelical commandment of love through the practical works of mercy and justice needed on this island. Timor, strong in evangelical love,* is certainly capable of fulfilling its mission to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world".

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:16).

It is not the Pope alone who calls you to this task. These are the words of our *Lord Jesus Christ himself.* He challenges you, but he also promises his presence and his grace. He is with you always.

And there is someone else who accompanies the people of Timor on their pilgrimage as they journey day by day to God's Kingdom: *Mary, your Mother in the Church,* Mary of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of the Diocese of Dili and of your new Cathedral, which I have been happy to bless today. She intercedes for the spiritual healing of her Timorese sons and daughters. The Catholics of East Timor who have sung her praises down the centuries can be sure of her maternal care at this time of uncertainty and much needed reconciliation and peace.

On life's pilgrimage, walk with Mary. Then, following her example, and filled with the Spirit "who renews the face of the earth" (Ps 103 [104]:30), the whole People of God in Timor will repeat the joyful words of the Responsorial Psalm:

"Bless the Lord, my soul!...
May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!" (Ps 105 [104]:1, 31).

Yes, may the Eucharist which we are now celebrating help the people of this island to be ever more truly "of one heart and one mind"—as a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, as a light which gives light to all in the house. *May the Spirit of truth accomplish this saving work,* Amen.

This reflection by some East Timorese priests prior to the Pope's visit in 1989 points to the delicate symbolism involved in the Pope's visit. Especially important is the hope placed in the visit despite the odds.

1. **The situation after 13 years.**

After 13 years of maximum effort by all levels of the Indonesian government to implement the policy of integration, the war continues. Even today the Indonesians continue to take prisoners from amongst the civilian population in Baucau and Venilale.

The people do not accept life under Indonesian rule because they have been oppressed right from the start. They have not been listened to at all.

The social situation is one of fear, disease, hunger, arrests without trial, corruption, prostitution, the constant presence of the Indonesian military, the decline of moral, cultural and Christian values, and the loss of Timorese identity; all of this being part of a well-defined plan which has as its aim the Indonesianisation of East Timor.

Today, no one, including the small group of East Timorese who in the first years were in favour of becoming part of Indonesia, wants integration. Today even they reject the idea although they are forced to remain silent.

There is a lot of talk about the socio-economic development promoted by the Indonesians. Indeed, they have built many houses (for the government officials!) and asphalted many roads; they have opened schools everywhere, but the level of education is extremely basic and once again the primary aim is Indonesianisation. This so-called development has benefited only the Indonesians, who are stealing the jobs of the Timorese.

2. **What is the meaning of the Pope's visit** in the context of this unresolved situation and after the genocide of more than 200,000 people, most of whom are practising Catholics?

This is the question on the lips of Timor's Christian population who are looking to the Church as a last resort. Many are asking themselves whether the Pope is coming to conclude and sanction the outrageous process of integration. The people of Timor have been ignored. If the Pope comes, His Holiness must speak of truth, justice and the freedom of humankind according to the teachings of the Church and in accordance with his own sermons.

The pain of the Timorese people is accentuated even further if we take into consideration the oppressive way in which the totalitarian Indonesian military system has been able to control absolutely everything and thus engineer the Pope's visit for its own ends.

We hear that the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in Timor has harshly reproached the Bishop and priests, saying that the Church has always been against integration and has not wanted to collaborate with them, but "in being able to bring the Pope here we have succeeded".

For the Indonesians, the visit is a diplomatic victory. The people of Timor will receive him as a Christian population receiving the Father of their faith, but this will be manipulated by the Indonesians. This means that the Pope's visit is sanctioning the crimes of the Indonesians. This is the sentiment of a voiceless people.

And if the site of the celebration of Mass is Tasi-Tolu, the connivance of the visit and the policy of genocide becomes all the more symbolic since this is where the mass killings of the 1975 and post - 1975 period took place. Even the simple people sense that this visit has something to do with the Indonesians. They find their spirits frozen, alone in a melancholy silence. Some will sing and dance but the soul of the people suffers.

3. Conclusion.

This visit of the Pope could be the salvation or the ruin, with catastrophic consequences, for this Christian community.

An Appeal to the Pope, From the East Timorese Community in Australia.

Holy Father,

We, the East Timorese people living in exile in Australia, wish to convey to Your Holiness, with our deepest respect, our sentiments regarding your visit to our homeland on October 12.

We are deeply moved by your wish to visit our small country to pray with our people. Your visit will be an historic moment in East Timor and a great honour and comfort to all Timorese. We believe that because you are the Universal Pastor and have a special responsibility for East Timor, you have both a right and an obligation to express your personal solidarity in faith and worship with our people, the majority of whom are now Catholics.

At the same time, however, we are deeply concerned that your visit will be manipulated for political purposes and that its pastoral character will be compromised.

We are concerned, for example, over reports that your visit to East Timor, whose integration with Indonesia is opposed by most East Timorese and is not recognised by the United Nations, will be preceded and followed by visits to Indonesia and, further, that all arrangements are being made by the Indonesian Government as the host of your visit. Though this is not your intention, we believe that cooperation with such arrangements will allow Indonesia to claim Papal recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, thereby politicising your visit and detracting from its pastoral purpose. Indonesia has already made such claims in recent speeches to the United Nations. We therefore strongly urge you to visit East Timor solely as our Pastor and religious leader and not as a guest of the Indonesian Government.

The international media has decided, rightly or wrongly, that if you do not kiss the ground on arrival in East Timor this will mean you regard East Timor as part of Indonesia. We respectfully ask that you do greet us with this beautiful gesture, and that this gesture be offered, and be seen to be offered, simply as a sign of your pastoral affection, not as a political statement.

It has also been reported that the Papal Mass in Dili will be celebrated in either Bahasa Indonesia or Latin. In our view, neither language is appropriate or necessary. We do not understand why Mass for an East Timorese congregation would not be celebrated in Tetum, the language of the people, which is already used regularly throughout East Timor for this purpose. The use of the Tetum vernacular would also appear to be more consistent with your welcome appeals in 1984 and 1986 in defence of the ethnic and cultural identity of the East Timorese people.

The historical circumstances of the Timorese people's mass conversion to the Catholic Church cannot be ignored. Our people have turned to the Church for protection and the advocacy of their rights. Our basic aspiration has recently found fresh expression in a letter, written by your Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, to the United Nations calling for the people to be consulted about their future, a plea we wholeheartedly endorse.

We urge you to listen to this aspiration and to be sensitive to the events which have shaped our faith and relationship with the Church. We urge that no arrangements be entered into which might offend or scandalise our people's faith in the Church.

When Your Holiness celebrates the death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Tacitolu, a notorious killing field in East Timor, we ask that you will remember our 200,000 loved ones who have perished from war since 1975.

Finally, Holy Father, we ask God to bless you. We pray that your visit to East Timor will be a clear sign of hope, a source of new unity and strength for our people, and a vindication of our trust in God and the Church.

On behalf of the East Timorese community in Australia:
Thomas de Jesus, President, Timorese Association of Victoria, Domingos Oliveira in Perth, Alfredo Ferreira in Darwin, Joao Carrascalao in Sydney on September 15, 1989

This press release by the Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands Catholic Commission of Justice, Peace and Development marks the Pope's visit to Indonesia. The PNG Church hopes for the visit to further the cause of the East Timorese rather than be used by Indonesia to justify its role.

The Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands at its recent Board Meeting in Port Moresby, expressed concern at the continuing situation in East Timor, and its support for the efforts of the Catholic Church in East Timor under the leadership of Bishop Carlos Felipe Belo, the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Dili. These sentiments were conveyed in a letter sent by the Commission to Bishop Belo in East Timor.

It is believed that over 100,000 East Timorese, one in six of the population, have died as a result of military activity and associated factors since the Indonesian military took over the former Portuguese Colony in 1975. Though almost 14 years have passed, the Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development is deeply disturbed at continuing reports of torture, killings and brutality by the Indonesian military, and concerned at recent statements made by Bishop Belo to journalists visiting East Timor, that the culture and identity of the East Timorese people was "dying day by day". The United Nations General Assembly still has East Timor on its Agenda and does not recognize the takeover of East Timor. It remains on the Agenda of the UN Sub-Commission for Decolonisation, and recently was adopted by the UN Sub-Commission for Human Rights as an area for consideration. Amnesty International continues to express concern at the human rights situation there.

The letter written by the PNG and Solomon Islands Commission for Justice, Peace and Development joins similar statements, or otherwise communicated, support and sympathy for the East Timorese by Bishop's Conferences and Catholic Justice and Peace Commissions in Western Europe - in Portugal, West Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands, as well as in Australia, Canada, USA and Japan. The Melanesian Council of Churches has recently sent a similar letter to Bishop Belo.

In its letter to Bishop Belo, the Commission noted its proximity to East Timor. It stated its "deep appreciation" of the efforts of the Church in East Timor to be with the people during these difficult and harsh years. The Commission recognizes the courage of Bishop Belo and the Church in condemning attempts to destroy the culture and the identity of the people of East Timor. The Commission believes the efforts of the Church have brought it, "considerable difficulties and suffering". At the same time, the Catholic population of East Timor has doubled since the Indonesian takeover, and it is estimated that ninety-two per cent of the population are Catholic. This remarkable growth of the Church is due to the fact that beset by war, hunger and an aggressive foreign presence, the people have turned to the Church for assistance, protection and as a vehicle to represent their concerns.

Referring to the forthcoming visit of Pope John Paul to Dili on October 12th, the Commission stated its hope that while in Dili, the Pope would bring consolation and encouragement to the Church by restating his concern for human rights, justice and the historical, ethnic and cultural identity of the East Timorese people. During 1984 and again in 1987, while receiving the credentials of the Indonesian Ambassador to the Holy See, the Pope singled out East Timor and Irian Jaya as demanding particular concern.

The CCJPD is concerned should the Indonesian authorities make political mileage out of the Holy Father's visit to East Timor, by presenting it as evidence of the Holy See's satisfaction with Indonesian policies and rule in East Timor. At present the Vatican follows the policy of the United Nations and does not recognize Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor. The CCJPD hopes that while visiting Indonesia, the Holy Father would use the opportunity to raise again his concern for human Rights in Irian Jaya, and the welfare of the traditional land owners in Irian Jaya, the Melanesian people of Irian Jaya.

The Catholic Commission in its letter pledges its support for Bishop Belo's recent initiative in writing to the secretary-General of the UN requesting the UN to start the process of conducting a referendum to allow the East Timorese people to vote on their future. The Commission notes that the Timorese people have not yet had the opportunity to participate in the internationally recognized right of self-determination to express their ideas and desires to whom they belong without pressure and force. The Commission believes with Bishop Belo, that there will be no just and authentic peace in East Timor until such an act of self determination takes place.

In its letter the Commission has assured Bishop Belo that it will continue to press for a just and proper solution to the situation in East Timor when opportunities arise in Papua New Guinea. As a neighbouring Church body, Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Development cannot ignore the situation in East Timor and calls made by the Catholic Church there. While recognizing the sensitivities that exist between governments, the Commission asks the government of Papua New Guinea not to ignore the pleas for basic humanitarian needs from a nearby neighbour. The PNG government's long term interests are best served by indicating concern for human rights and the identity of the Timorese people. We believe that the government of Papua New Guinea ought to take a more active role in the United Nations and in the region on this issue, and use the opportunities it has in its relationship with the Indonesian government to voice the concern of Church bodies in PNG for the people of East Timor.

The CCJPD has asked Bishop Belo to convey to the priests, religious and laity of the Church in East Timor, its concern, support and admiration. It looks forward to an opportunity in the future to welcome Bishop Belo to Papua New Guinea, and to be briefed by him on the situation in East Timor.

This press release from the European Christian Consultation on East Timor highlights the significance and sensibility of the Pope's visit to East Timor in 1989. It is a strong statement calling for the Pope to make explicit his intentions in visiting East Timor.

East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, has been occupied by the Indonesian armed forces since 1975. Virtually cut off from the rest of the world, the largely Christian population of East Timor continues to struggle against the occupation in spite of particularly brutal repression. Human rights organisations conservatively estimate that since 1975 one third of the population has perished in conflict, or as the result of repression and widespread famine.

Titled *Justice and Development for East Timor: a Moral challenge*, the Fifth Consultation heard the personal testimony of a refugee who recently arrived from East Timor and discussed the current economic, political and military situation in the territory.

The participants also studied the human rights situation in East Timor, influenced particularly by the appeal which East Timor's bishop, Mgr. Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, supported by the East Timorese clergy, sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Mgr Belo called for human rights to be respected, for the preservation of the people of Timor with their ethnic, cultural and religious identity and for the organisation of a referendum. His appeal was taken up in the European Parliament and in the United Nations Human Rights Sub-committee, which adopted resolutions respectively in May and August 1989.

The participants brought themselves up to date with the latest information about the coming visit of Pope John Paul II, and they expressed particular concern about the way this visit has been prepared and the fact that the context is such that, though legitimate from a pastoral point of view, it will be used by the Indonesian government for political ends.

The participants recalled the position adopted by John Paul II from 1984 onwards, when he told the Indonesian ambassador in Rome of his hope that "the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of this people will receive special attention."

They deplored the fact that the Pope's visit has been prepared by the Indonesian political and religious authorities, without consulting those principally concerned-The Timorese clergy and faithful.

As a result the language of Timor's people, Tetum, is unlikely to be used in the mass which the Pope will celebrate during his visit, and the visit itself will last a few hours, too short a period to permit him or his numerous advisers, or the press corps who will accompany him, to inform themselves about the situation in the territory.

It should be noted that at Taci-Tolu, the site chosen for celebrating the Eucharist, thousands of Timorese have been executed by Indonesian soldiers.

Participants at the Fifth Christian Consultation also expressed their fear that this pastoral visit will be used for political aims. The first published itinerary indicates that John Paul II's visit to East Timor will take place within his visit to Indonesia. Indonesian diplomats have already used this fact to claim that the Vatican publicly recognises East Timor's annexation by the Republic of Indonesia. The Indonesian ambassador to the United Nations used this argument last week during two speeches delivered to the UN subcommittee in Geneva.

It was the hope of participants at the Fifth Christian Consultation on East Timor that the Pope will make his visit to East Timor after his visit to Indonesia has ended.

They expressed the wish that, during his stay in East Timor, the Pope will respond to the cry of the Timorese people, remembering the call to justice contained in the message of the Gospel. They decided to send a message of solidarity to Mgr. Belo and the clergy of East Timor.

Finally, they appealed to all those who will accompany John Paul II on his pastoral visit to East Timor to bear in mind the special context of his visit, the tragic situation of the Timorese people and the manipulative use which the Indonesian authorities will almost certainly make of this occasion.

Peter Philp's reflection was written after his visit to East Timor to cover the Papal visit. Peter was much affected by the East Timorese and his time with Bishop Belo. He urges the Australian church to respond to the situation in East Timor. Peter Philp was the editor of *The Advocate*, the former Archdiocesan newspaper of Melbourne.

The Australian Catholic and Protestant Churches who are committed to justice and peace must confront the issue of East Timor and demonstrate the depth of their commitment.

The recent Papal visit to East Timor was not the total political victory that the Indonesian government hoped it would be. In spite of Jakarta's cleverly, yet hastily, orchestrated normalisation program for John Paul's tour, the reality of East Timor could not be obliterated.

The Papal stopover was a powerful reminder to everybody concerned about peace and justice that the people of East Timor are being denied their basic rights.

East Timor has not gone away. The healing process has not taken place. Within 30 minutes of my arrival in Dili, I was very much aware that fear, violence and abuse of human rights were still part of daily survival in this place. And the cry for change is not only coming from the forces of Fretilin in the jungle or from isolated groups in the community, but from the major body of Timorese - the Catholic Church.

The acid test now for Australian churches is will they be prepared to pull out all stops to keep the issue of East Timor alive and how much are they willing to give in the way of resources, influence and solidarity to instigate a process of peaceful change? If there was ever an opportunity for the church to prove to an increasingly godless Australian society that it was still relevant, it is now.

The Pope's stopover in East Timor allowed the people of this troubled land a brief respite from solitary confinement. Many Timorese used this brief occasion, despite the tremendous risk, to express their suffering and despair about the future. Those prepared to be interviewed had diverse opinions. It would be dishonest to claim that everybody spoke with one accord, however, there was a clear message from the ordinary Timorese that since the 1975 invasion they had lived under oppression and that oppression continued today. Many were determined to continue the struggle against Indonesian colonisation, while others admitted that there had been too much bloodshed for too little result and they were prepared now to accept the status quo. Also there were those East Timorese who had been prepared to compromise their principles during the long captive years. Their collaboration had won them privilege and as a result they were not interested in either independence or a referendum.

Nobody denies that the Indonesian invasion brought with it unforgivable brutality, but those, who today accept integration with Indonesia, claim that the suffering and abuse of human rights is all in the past.

During my short stay in East Timor, the wide circle of people with whom I spoke, rejected that claim. The most vocal was the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Carlos Belo. "Yes they are still the same. There is no change. On account of that, I wrote the letter to the United Nations. People are arrested. They suffer physical, moral and psychological abuses. Here the human being is not important," said Monsignor Belo.

Catholic bishops are frequently criticised for their silence and caution. So when a prelate makes a public stand against state authorities, the situation is generally very grave.

Monsignor Belo's concern about the continuous repression in East Timor was demonstrated in June of this year when he wrote to military commanders, the governor of East Timor, the Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta and the Indonesian Bishops' Conference threatening to cancel the Pope's visit to East Timor. "We are writing in protest as members of the Catholic Church in East Timor regarding the dirty campaign against the bishop, priests and the Catholic church conducted by the elements of the armed forces in Baucau and Viqueque. If this month this dirty campaign continues, we will ask the Pope to cancel his visit to East Timor next October," said Bishop Belo.

During my visit with Monsignor Belo, he left no doubt in my mind that both his priests and laity were targets of abuse and that he was prepared to defend his people and would never be silenced. "They have criticised us on the media. In Dili there have been menacing calls - 'Kill the bishop - Hurt the bishop'," continued Monsignor Belo.
I asked him if he sometimes felt like Archbishop Romero.
"I admire Monsignor Romero. I try to be near my people. If it is necessary to die for the people, I am prepared to give my life for them."

Two concerns forced the bishop to write that letter to the United Nations Secretary-General. One was the ongoing killing, jailing and suffering of his people and, two, the fear that the Timorese culture would be lost. "Step by step we will lose our historical and cultural identity. It is important to reveal this kind of integration," the bishop reminded me.

While in Dili a Catholic priest confirmed to me that 27 Timorese had been killed by the military and many had disappeared since May of this year. A male nurse told me that following the release of Bishop Belo's letter to the UN, 82 people had been rounded up by security men. "They were tortured with electric shocks and were struck in the stomach. This was reported to the bishop. They are not disillusioned because they suffered. They are still happy that the bishop sent the letter," claimed the nurse. He said that the Catholic Church was the only organisation defending the people's rights. The day before the Pontiff's arrival, the nurse had said to me: "We want the Pope to recognise our freedom and independence." I had met this man at the rear of a church late one night. He had been under surveillance and feared that he and his wife would be detained. He admitted that if he could get out of East Timor he would, but he was not allowed to leave. "Better we die than stay with this. When they have this land firmly in their hands, they will exterminate my generation," said the nurse.

On another occasion, a priest told me that there were attempts to have the bishop renege on his call for a referendum and that sources in the military had told him that there had been suggestions that Bishop Belo and his Vicar-General should be imprisoned and foreign priests expelled. The priest said there were also rumours that there would be pressure on the Vatican to recall Monsignor Belo and then divide East Timor into two dioceses as part of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference.

Very quickly you learn that the Catholic Church in East Timor is badly scarred by division. You can run the chalk line down between those who are Timorese and Portuguese and those who are Indonesian. In one religious house the division was so acute that a priest said to me that it was unsafe to speak so he arranged to meet me one evening at a different locality. He claimed that he was being followed by security agents and that some of the priests in his own community were spies for the Indonesian military.

However, Jesuit, Fr Marcus Wanandi, a Chinese Indonesian from Sumatra, believes that there has been a decrease in human rights abuses and that they never came exclusively from the military side. "There is still a bitter struggle between Timor's family clans. There is a strong bond between these families. But if they quarrel with each other they tend to hold grudges for a long time. Many problems involve clans."

Speaking about human rights abuse, Fr Wanandi suggested that the Church does not investigate claims involving these abuses. "They just believe what people tell them. Sometimes you believe what you like to hear, not the reality of what is happening."

Fr Wanandi does not believe that the Timorese are ready for a referendum to determine their future because of widespread illiteracy and the people's lack of understanding of the situation. "How could they think about national and international issues? They would have no idea what to say or do. They leave these decisions to their government representatives who went to Jakarta to complain about Bishop Belo's letter."

Fr Wanandi said that some of the problems of East Timor stem from a lack of understanding of Javanese culture. He said that the Javanese hold their culture in high esteem and that is the way they came to East Timor. They just wanted to change people's mentality. The Jesuit claimed that if the church was seeking genuine dialogue, it must learn something about this culture. "You can't start talking to him (the Javanese) until you are his friend. You can't talk to him if you are opposed to him."

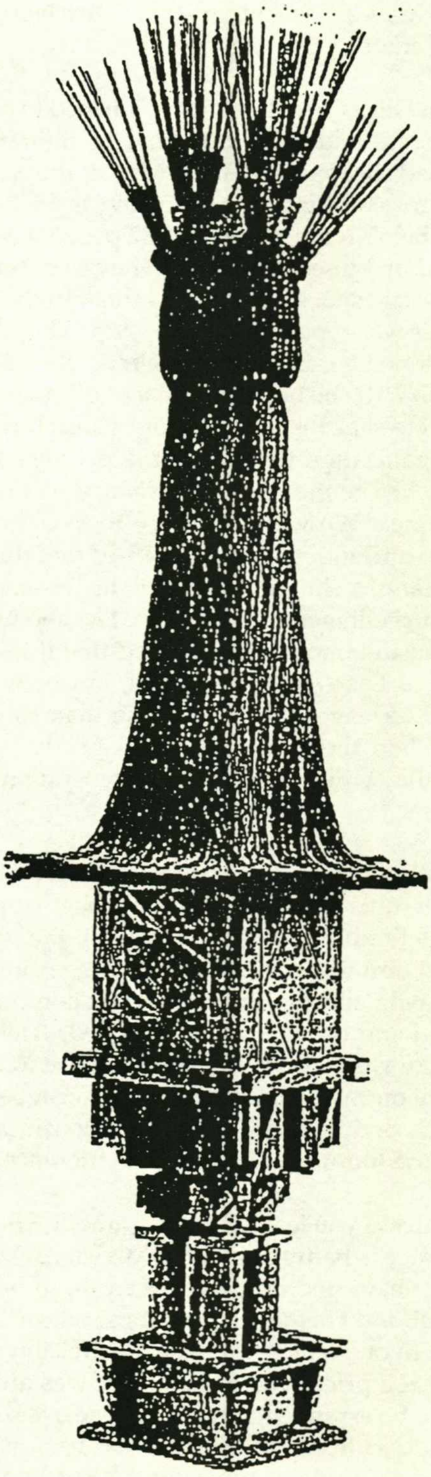
A man who spent some time in the hills fighting with Fretilin, and who is now a prominent Catholic layman, maintains that life in East Timor has improved since 1980. He admitted that what was important to him now was quality of life and not continued bloodshed.

The veteran Italian missionary Salesian priest, Eligion Locatelli summed up the situation in this way: "It is a tragedy. They are losing their culture. But nothing can stop this process. Fact is fact, reality is reality. They have to accept it. We try to defend the people's rights. We are not always successful." After 25 hard years proclaiming the Gospel in East Timor, Father Locatelli spoke with a deep love of his people and a long experience in the politics of the country.

Two important issues that must be kept alive in the immediate future are Bishop Belo's call for a referendum and the continued physical and psychological warfare waged by the Indonesian military against those Timorese courageous enough to speak to in defence of their rights, culture and survival.

Monsignor Carlos Belo's letter to the UN Secretary-General was a very significant step forward for East Timor. Shamefully, the potential impact of a referendum has been ignored by the Australian keepers of democracy, while the Indonesian authorities and sections of the Indonesian church and the Vatican have moved swiftly to discredit this initiative. After 400 years of being locked in a colonial cage, who can dispute the rights of the Timorese to decide their future? Therefore, to allow more debate and understanding about the current situation in East Timor and to appreciate why the church is prepared to risk so much in pursuit of a referendum, Australia needs to hear the story from the one person who has wide enough support among the Timorese people. Bishop Carlos Belo told me in Dili that he would be interested in coming to Australia and telling his story. But he explained that it would not be possible unless he was officially invited by a body such as the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. So far the Bishops have not yet indicated whether they will offer such an invitation.

Let us hope that the Catholic Church, which internationally has championed the cause of those who are oppressed and downtrodden, will not let this opportunity drift by. If the Australian bishops choose not to become involved, let us hope that other justice loving Christians will act quickly before the Timorese are once again locked away for another 14 years in solitary confinement.



CHAPTER FIVE

Santa Cruz 12th November, 1991

The massacre of scores of young East Timorese at the Santa Cruz cemetery on November 12th 1991 was not the first or worst massacre to occur since the Indonesian invasion.

However, it was the first to occur in front of westerners with cameras. The pictures they flashed around the world horrified those who saw them.

It began with a dawn mass at the Motael church to mourn the death of Sebastiao Gomes, a student shot dead two weeks earlier by Indonesian security forces. As hundreds of East Timorese marched to Sebastiao's grave to lay flowers, many unfurled banners they had prepared for the visit of a Portuguese delegation which had been cancelled. Outside the cemetery, with no warning, troops opened fire on the crowd. Hundreds were killed, wounded or went missing. There are reports of continued killings by the military in the following days.

The response of the Indonesian government was directed more at the international outcry than to the victims and their families. Despite an official Indonesian inquiry, to this day there is still no accurate number of how many were killed, wounded or detained. The sentences of the soldiers convicted of killing the demonstrators were minimal compared to the heavy sentences imposed on those accused of leading the demonstration.

The conditions in East Timor that led to the Santa Cruz massacre have not changed. The new Governor and military commander display and advocate a more rigid intolerance of dissent. The military still control the territory, abuses of human rights continue and the people are restless for a just, free and open society.

A stark iron cross stands in the Santa Cruz cemetery - a memorial to those who were killed. Many people visit to light candles and lay flowers at its base. In remembering their loved ones and the hopes and aspirations they died for, they continue to carry a strong commitment to justice and human dignity.

This eyewitness account remembers the day at Santa Cruz. It was given by Amy Goodman for Pax Christi International at UN Commission on Human Rights in February 1992.

Thank you. Mr Chairman. My name is Amy Goodman. I'm a journalist with Pacifica Radio, a public radio network in the United States. I want to thank Pax Christi for inviting me to speak.

Several months ago I survived a massacre in East Timor carried out by the Indonesian army.

On November 12, thousands of Timorese gathered for a mass commemorating the recent death of a young man killed when soldiers surrounded and shot into the Catholic Church.

After the mass, they marched to the cemetery. As the procession wove its way through the streets of Dili, more and more people joined - from their workplaces, schools and homes. The crowd was defiant, but orderly, with junior high school boys trotting along, putting up the V sign and chanting "Viva", and older boys yelling, "Disciplina! Disciplina!" keeping them in line. And people carried banners; a forbidden act in East Timor. "Indonesia, why you shoot our church"; and "Portugal, we are your responsibility" were among the slogans they carried. By the time the procession reached the cemetery, there were well over three thousand people. Like the funeral two weeks before, things were winding down and this seemed to be the time that everyone would go home; that is, until we saw hundreds of troops marching towards the crowd in formation; machine guns in hand.

At this point, journalist Allan Nairn and I moved to the front of the crowd so that the soldiers would see us. As Westerners with head phones, tape recorder, microphone and camera in full view, we thought the soldiers would be less likely to do anything rash. We were wrong. As the soldiers rounded the corner, twelve to fifteen of them lined up in front of the crowd and without missing a beat began firing into the crowd. Their automatic weapons spraying bullets from right to left and back, mowing everyone down in front of them. The Timorese were trapped. With walled cemeteries on either side, they had nowhere to go. When they saw the soldiers coming, some people started to back up, others began to turn around and run.

A few seconds after the Indonesian soldiers began shooting, other soldiers surrounded me. One grabbed my microphone and shook it in my face, then pushed me onto the ground. Others ripped off my bag and equipment and began kicking me in the sides and stomach, punching me in the face and hitting me with their rifles. At that point, Allan, who was just behind me when the troops had opened fire threw himself over me as I was being beaten, protecting me from further injury. We were then directly behind the line of fire and they just kept beating and kicking Allan in the head and chest and sides until his shirt was drenched in blood.

At one point, Allan's hands and legs went into spasm and he couldn't protect himself anymore. The soldiers continued to beat his head with rifle butts, until they fractured his skull. They then put the M-16s to our heads. We kept shouting we are from America, America. After a few minutes, they dared not to execute us. Instead, they focussed their attention on an old Timorese man next to us whom they beat into a sewer ditch. Every time he picked up his head, a soldier would mercilessly kick it or punch it down with his rifle butt. We kept our heads down and eyes averted, fearing that just our looking in their direction would enrage the soldiers further.

A jeep drove by, and we jumped into it as the driver helped the old man in. No matter how brutally we had been treated, it was nothing compared to what had happened to the Timorese. Bodies were lying everywhere. The soldiers had now moved into the cemetery. As we drove off, we continued to hear gunfire. The jeep was soon flagged down by a young Timorese man and within minutes dozens of terrified people had climbed through the windows, were hanging off the sides and back of the jeep, as the soldiers sealed off the entire neighbourhood around the cemetery, killing people as they went.

We drove to the hospital, where the wounded were crowding in. We saw a teenager shot in the back, another being operated on and a boy with his arm ripped open. People were lying in the hallways. We spoke with religious and medical people, all of whom said they had tried to get into the massacre area to help the wounded, but the soldiers wouldn't let them go. Kamal Bamachaj, a New Zealand student studying in Australia had been in the crowd at the cemetery. He was standing behind us, holding a camera, minutes before the soldiers opened fire. He was shot. The Red Cross jeep that drove him to the hospital was stopped twice by the military and detained. The Indonesian doctor who treated the young man told his family he could have lived through the bullet wounds. It was the loss of blood that killed him. Hours later, when we fled the country, the army was moving from house to house, rounding people up.
The Timorese bishop estimates more than 180 people were killed.

We had originally gone to East Timor to report on the human rights situation before, during and after the visit of the Portuguese delegation. Although their trip was cancelled, we still travelled throughout the countryside, speaking with dozens of Timorese. We heard the same story everywhere. The military had held meetings in each village, warning the people that if anyone spoke with the Portuguese, they would be killed as soon as the delegation left. In addition, the Timorese were told, mass graves had already been dug for their bodies. It was clear that a nationwide death threat had been issued. Before the massacre, East Timor Bishop Belo said the military had repeatedly told the Timorese if they spoke, their families would be killed "to the seventh generation".

We had also been in East Timor the summer of 1990. With this trip over a year later, we found the situation had deteriorated even further. Disappearances, imprisonment and torture had increased dramatically, further terrorizing the population. This was the context in which the massacre took place.

Recently, the Indonesian government officially banned the New Yorker correspondent and me from returning to the country. If Indonesia wants to cut down on negative publicity, the answer is not to beat and ban journalists, but to stop the killings, detentions and tortures that have continued even since the November 12 massacre. In addition they should abide by the two UN Security Council resolutions passed after the invasion calling on Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor without delay.

This letter by Church leaders from Europe, the Pacific, North and South America was written just before the Dili killings. It talks of the tension within Timor and the need for sensitivity in dealing with the East Timorese during the proposed visit to Timor by Portuguese parliamentarians. This visit never eventuated. However, the journalists who were present during the Dili killings had originally come to Timor to cover the visit.

Dear Sr Perez De Cuellar,

We are writing to you to express our grave concern for the safety of the people of East Timor during and after the visit of the Portuguese Parliamentary delegation next month.

The protocol covering this visit, agreed between the governments of Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the United Nations, states clearly that anyone wishing to approach the delegation will be free to do so, and will suffer no adverse consequences from this contact.

However, we read with alarm reports in the Jakarta Post recently that Governor Mario Carrascalao has stated that the Portuguese delegates 'should not talk to any East Timorese anywhere at their own will...none of the delegation will be allowed to leave the group and talk to the people'.

It is now in the public domain that our brother, Bishop Belo of East Timor, recently confided in a letter to a fellow bishop his belief that any Timorese who approaches the Portuguese delegation will be killed. He speaks of an atmosphere of growing intimidation and fear at the hands of the Indonesian military, of increasing intelligence activity, night raids on homes and of indoctrination. In a recent radio interview he stressed that only the presence of an 'international force to control the situation after the departure of the Portuguese deputies can guarantee the safety of the Timorese. This is because the Indonesian Authorities continue to declare to the remotest corners that the Portuguese are coming here to dissociate themselves and to support integration, which is why the people should remain silently in their homes, nobody should say anything or take part in demonstrations because, if they were to do so, they will all be killed after the deputies leave'.

We appeal to you to take steps to ensure that the safeguards and guarantees set out in the Protocol agreed by the Indonesian and Portuguese governments are completely adhered to by the Indonesians, and particularly to ensure that no reprisals will be taken against the people of East Timor following the visit.

By way of verifying the security of the Timorese people after the visit is over, may we request that the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture for the Commission on Human Rights be permitted to extend his stay in East Timor for two or three weeks longer than the scheduled two days 17-19 November. Alternatively, perhaps a small group of UN officials could remain behind to monitor the human rights situation.

We thank you for your attention and hope that you give consideration to our concerns. We assure you of our prayers in this difficult undertaking.

Yours sincerely,
Rt Rev John Crowley-Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, Chairman of CAFOD, UK.
His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Williams-Archbishop of Wellington New Zealand
Most Rev Luciano Mendes de Almeida-Archbishop of Mariana, Brazil
Most Rev Peter Shirayanagi-Archbishop of Tokyo, President of National Council for Justice and Peace, Japan.

Fellow Signatories:
Most Rev John Aloysius Ward-Archbishop of Cardiff, Wales, UK
Most Rev Dennis E Hurley-Archbishop of Durban, South Africa
Rt Rev Crispian Hollis-Bishop of Portsmouth, UK
Rt Rev John Rawsthorne-Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool, UK
Rt Rev Antonio Celso Queiroz-Auxiliary Bishop of Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Rt Rev Denis Browne-Bishop of Auckland, Chairperson, Catholic commission for Justice, Peace and Development, New Zealand.
Rt Rev Maurice Taylor-Bishop of Galloway, Vice President Catholic Institute for International Relations, Episcopal Secretary of the Scottish Bishops Conference.
Rt Rev Hubertes Brandenburg-Bishop of Stockholm, Sweden.
Rt Rev William Kenny-President Caritas Sweden, President Caritas Europe.
Rt Rev Stephen Hamao-Chairperson of Office of Human Development, Federation of Asian Bishops Conference, Japan.
Rt Rev Aloisius N Soma-Bishop of Nagoya, Chairperson of Japanese Council for Justice and Peace, Japan.
Rt Rev John Mone-Bishop of Paisley, President of Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund and President of Justice and Peace Commission, Scotland, UK
Rt Rev Luigi Bettazzi-Bishop of Ivrea, Former President Pax Christi International, Italy
Rt Rev Antonia Bello, Bishop of Molfetta-President of Pax Christi Italia, Italy.

Rt Rev Eammon Casey, Bishop of Galway, Chairperson Trocaire, Ireland.
Rt Rev Jean Guy Hamelin, Bishop of Rouyn-Norand, Canada, Ecclesiatical Advisor to Cooperation Internationale Pour Le Developpement et la Solidarite (CIDSE).
Rt Rev Paul Moore Jr.-Episcopal Bishop of New York, USA.

This is the Response by Indonesian Bishops after their Chairman's visit. The killings in Dili in November 1991 are referred to as 'The East Timor Incident' by the Indonesians.

1. With a view of helping settle the East Timor problem, we believe that it is imperative that the feelings and all that lives in the hearts of the people of East Timor, especially in the town of Dili, be given due and full attention and careful consideration.
It was thus that we felt compelled to release a press statement on November the 14th, 1991 wherein the KWI stated that it will continually follow and study developments in East Timor. To this end Father Alfon S. Suhardi OFM, Head of the Documentation and Information Department at the KWI, left for Dili on November the 22nd., to return on November the 26th. He was followed by Mgr. J. Darmaatmadja SJ, Chairman of the KWI, together with Mgr. M. D. Situmorang OFMcap, Secretary of the KWI, who left on the 25th and returned on the 27th of November 1991.

2. These visits proved immensely valuable. We were able to meet people who had witnessed the incident at first hand as well as others who received immediate reports from eyewitnesses of the November 12th incident. We were able to learn what was commonly being said in and around Dili but not being heard elsewhere.
Besides reports and data that were considerably at variance with official accounts, we also received new information. For instance, many families still do not know whether husband, relative or child are still alive; a good number are still being treated in the military hospital, where they are not allowed to receive any visitors. The location of the graves of the dead is not known. We heard reports of inhuman treatment of the bodies, dragged away, thrown into trucks and carried off. Families were not informed on burial arrangements. It is not clear whether those buried received a proper religious ceremony. As to the casualty figure: some spoke of three trucks, others a figure of 100 dead. The identity of those shot remains unknown. It is thought that some were Fretilin members, that others were demonstrators, and still others were from among those who had come to the cemetery in great numbers, in response to an earlier radio announcement. Many ask why ABRI opened fire, the cause of so many casualties. These shots were fired at the entrance of the Santa Cruz cemetery, well away from where two members of ABRI had been stabbed.
It this was in self defence one needs to ask whether the number of casualties should have been so high. Why did ABRI not take preventive measures to stop the demonstrators mixing with throngs who had come with their flowers for the graves?

3. We therefore find it necessary that the veil surrounding the November 12th incident be drawn back through and objective probe. It is now left to the KPN...the National Investigation Committee.. to carry out this task. We are convinced that opening fire, which led to so many casualties, is not the policy of the government nor of the Armed Forces. To many it seemed that ABRI had been monitoring the demonstrators in an appropriate way. Moreover, some reported that at the time of shooting, some ABRI troops were trying to restrain their colleagues. Another piece of valuable information was that at the location where two ABRI members were stabbed by demonstrators there was no immediate retaliation. Those who usually have access to information question the truth of rumours saying that on the evening of the 12th of November there were executions taking place. We are therefore deeply concerned that because of the actions of a group in ABRI the moral integrity, honour and national credibility is put at risk, in both the international community and at home, and especially in the eyes of the East Timorese people, whose minds and hearts we should win.

4. We urge that all parties assist the probes of the KPN through creating a situation where people would feel completely free to speak out on what they know and be assured of their welfare and safety.

5. In reports of the November the 12th incident the involvement of the church of Motael was mentioned. When on October the 28th ABRI conducted a search of the church and church buildings Mgr. Belo himself was present. Mgr. admits that there were people found there and that they were duly taken out. He claims that there were no sharp weapons shown to him when allegedly found. Yet when the pastor of the church was interrogated at the POLWIL (police station), he was finally led to a table where sharp weapons, posters and other material were displayed - said to have been found in the presbytery.
We do not wish to say more on the involvement of the Motael church. This could easily be interpreted as self defence and as a failure to seek objectivity. Should it prove to be true that the pastor was involved in the November 12th incident, then the nature of his involvement would obviously have

to be investigated. Suitable measures would then have to be taken. This would apply to anyone else proved to be at fault. However, we do not wish to add that the bishop, the priests and religious in East Timor, in fulfilling their pastoral task, have to stand above all political affiliations, which often places them in difficult situations. Both opposing sides have regularly accused them of not giving enough support. We can note that in September 1991, Xanana, the leader of Fretilin, expressed sharp criticism of both Pope John Paul II and Mgr. Carlos Philipe Ximenes Belo.
The attitude of Mgr. Belo relating to the latest incidents is given in his Pastoral Statement of November the 22nd (enclosed).

6. We feel it most pressing now that the people's feelings of security, and trust in the government be restored.

The Japanese Bishops wrote to Bishop Belo on 12 December 1991. They expressed their condolences for the recent killings and expressed their solidarity with the people of East Timor in recounting the stories of Japanese occupation of East Timor and their own attacks on the faith life of the East Timorese people. This powerful letter displays a heartfelt solidarity of each Japanese Bishop.

Tokyo, 12th December 1991.

His Excellency,
The Most Reverend Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo

Your Grace,

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO BISHOP BELO REGARDING THE MASSACRE OF THE EAST TIMORESE BY THE INDONESIAN MILITARY

One month has already passed since the terrible massacre of a great number of East Timorese by the Indonesian National Forces which fired on thousands of East Timorese citizens gathered in Santa Cruz Cemetery for the purpose of offering flowers at the tomb of a fellow citizen who had been killed.

We, the Japanese Bishops, gathered for our Annual Assembly wish to express our great sorrow about this incident. We also wish to convey our heartfelt sympathies to you, Bishop Belo, who represent the East Timorese Catholic Church which is always so close to the people of East Timor.

On the 20th of November a press conference was held by Fr Stefani Renato in the Office Building of the House of Representatives in Tokyo. Fr Renato, a priest from Nagoya Diocese, was in Dili on the very day of the incident and during the conference, he told everything he witnessed and heard from the people. He stressed how cruel the incident was because the Military fired on unarmed and helpless citizens.

We hear that the starting point of this series of massacres was the killing of two young East Timorese at Motael Church. Many young people who demanded self-determination and were in danger of being arrested were under the protection of the Church. We wish that this right of self-determination which is a right of every nation and one that is guaranteed by the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be given back to the East Timorese through appropriate ways and means.

We express our strong support of your demand for a referendum as presented by your Excellency to the Secretary General of the United Nations in February 1989.

According to the information we received, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, expressed his intention to send some human rights specialists to investigate this massacre. We urge the United Nations to carry out a thorough investigation of this incident and do its best to find a total solution to the East Timor problem.

Japan occupied East Timor for three years and a half during the Second World War and destroyed its beautiful Cathedral. We remember this crime committed by our nation and sincerely repent of this action. Because of this sad history we feel a very strong solidarity with you. We wish that freedom will be established as soon as possible in East Timor and pray for you and your people that our Mighty Lord will help you all with his great strength.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Aloisius N. Soma
Bishop of Nagoya

+ Joseph S. Fukahori
Bishop of Takamatsu

+ Peter Baptist Ishigami
OFM Cap.
Bishop of Naha

+ Petrus T. Hirayama
Episcopus Oitensis

+ Paul Itonaga
Bishop of Kagoshima

+ F.X. Shimamoto
Archbishop of Nagasaki

+ Joseph A. Misue
Bishop of Hiroshima

+ Peter Shirayanagi
Archbishop of Tokyo

+ Raymundus K. C. Sato, op
Episcopus Sendaiensis

+ Raymond K. Tanaka
Bishop of Kyoto

+ Joseph Matsunaga
Bishop of Fukuoka

+ Peter T. Jinushi
Bishop of Sapporo

+ Paulus Mori
Aux. B. Tokio

+ Peter T. Okada
Bishop of Urawa

+ Paul H. Yasuda
Archbishop of Osaka

+ Franciscus K. Sato
Bishop of Niigata

+ Stephen J. Hamao
Bishop of Yokohama

This most pastoral homily was delivered by the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, E.B. Clancy, three weeks after the Dili killings. It shows the Church's care for East Timor on a personal as well as international level.

CARDINAL CLANCY'S HOMILY FOR THE EAST TIMORESE MASS ON SATURDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 1991.

It is incredible that in a world that has made the most amazing advances in science and technology and has made possible the highest standards of human living, there should yet be so much suffering and injustice.

Not only individuals, but whole communities are often denied their basic human rights, and innocent people are imprisoned and abused and put to death. At this very time there are several instances of such barbarism around the world. The rest of the world stands helplessly by, and even connives at what is taking place. In some instances, innocent people are the common victims of conflicting forces, to none of which they themselves belong.

As a human race we have a long way to go in terms of true civilization and due respect for the person of every human being. As a human race we must all share a certain sense of guilt and shame.

Recent tragic events have brought into clearer focus, and attracted world attention to, the plight of the people of East Timor. Horror over the massacre of so many unarmed and peaceful Timorese at the Santa Cruz Cemetery on November 12th has been expressed internationally.

However, you, the Timorese people of Sydney, are gathered here this morning in St. Mary's Cathedral, not by way of political or provocative demonstration; you are here in faith and hope to pray for your compatriots and relatives who have died, and to ask God's merciful intervention on behalf of the Timorese people.

In your Christian faith you see light and hope even in those tragic deaths, and you believe that all the suffering of you yourselves and your people will not have been in vain. Our Christian faith is founded on the death and resurrection of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. His rising to new life from suffering and death is forever repeating itself in the lives of those who believe, both of individuals and of peoples. To-day we pray that from their current Calvary, the East Timorese might soon rise to new life.

They may be assured that Christ who himself suffered so grievously does not overlook or disregard the suffering, the privations and the deaths among His people of East Timor. They have a special claim on His love and His providence.

You grieve for those who have died, and the Church of Sydney joins with you in your grieving. We may belong to different countries and cultures, but we all belong to the one family of God. We are all brothers and sisters claiming the same Father in Heaven. We are the Mystical Body of Christ; the pain and suffering of even one member is pain and suffering for the whole Body. The hope and expectation that suffuses the Body is shared by all its members.

It is in faith and hope that we commit our deceased Timorese brothers and sisters to the mercy and compassion of our heavenly Father.

We all might make our own the words of the Psalmist as we pray for justice, peace and freedom on behalf of the people of East Timor:

> *"Here the voice of my pleading*
> *as I call for help,*
> *as I lift up my hands in prayer*
> *to your holy place.*
> *Blessed be the Lord for he*
> *has heard*
> *my cry, my appeal.*
> *The Lord is my strength and*
> *my shield;*
> *In him my heart trusts;*
> *The Lord is the strength of*
> *his people*
> *A fortress where his anointed*
> *find help.*
> *Save your people; bless*
> *Israel your heritage*
> *Be their shepherd, and*
> *carry them forever.*

RESPONSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

"The massacre November 12 by Indonesian security forces of 'dozens' of unarmed mourners at a Catholic cemetery cannot be allowed to pass without a strong denunciation by our government. This is a gross violation of the most fundamental right, that of life itself, and deserves to be denounced as such." **(United States Catholic Conference, November 19, 1991)**

It appears that human-rights abuses in East Timor have continued to occur following the Santa Cruz massacre on 12 November.

We have unconfirmed reports that the Indonesian Army has conducted house-to-house searches for people who survived the march to the cemetery. This complements another published claim that all the men in a suburb of Dili had been rounded up.

Meanwhile, General Try Sutrisno, the commander of the Indonesian armed forces, has been quoted as saying that "people who refuse to toe the line will be shot" (Melbourne Age, 20 November).

Brigadier-General Rudolf Warouw, the Indonesian military commander in East Timor, has been quoted as admitting that his troops fired into the crowd of mourners at Santa Cruz cemetery for ten minutes, which he regarded as not "too long a time" (Age, 21 November).

These reports lead the Bishops' Committee to call on the Australian Government:

- to move in the United Nations General Assembly, currently in session, that Indonesia's action against people assembled at the Santa Cruz cemetery be investigated without delay by representatives of the UN Commission of Human Rights;

- to move that Indonesia's membership of the Commission be suspended until the UN investigation into the Santa Cruz incident is completed;

- to move that a United Nations-sponsored plebiscite be conducted to determine the wishes of the East Timorese people, with the option of independence being available to East Timor should the people vote for it...

We fear that, unless remedial action is taken immediately to curb the Indonesian military, incidents even worse than the Santa Cruz massacre are likely to occur with even greater loss of life.
(The Australian Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace, 22nd November, 1991)

The Catholic Bishops of Australia endorse the call made by their Committee for Justice, Development and Peace on 22 November for a credible and independent investigation by the United Nations into the recent tragic killings and other alleged human rights abuses in East Timor....

According to a number of reports reaching us, the atmosphere in East Timor to this day continues to be one of fear and apprehension. Any investigation into the human rights situation there should not be limited to the events of 12 November but should also examine allegations of abuses, including summary executions, disappearances, detentions and other forms of harassment before and since that date.

This statement is issued on the vigil of 7 December 1991, when Catholics in several parts of Australia will join their East Timorese friends in praying at Mass for the victims of the massacre, for their families and friends and for a just and peaceful solution of the problems in East Timor.

It is an appropriate moment for Australian Catholics to express solidarity with all those who suffer from injustice and persecution anywhere.

In the case of the East Timorese, both geography and history give us especially compelling reasons for such a response.

East Timor is less than an hour away by air from our coastline. Thousands of its people, our near neighbours, died to protect Australian service personnel during the Pacific War, which commenced exactly fifty years ago. We have an unpaid debt to those largely unsung heroes.

We urge those who take part in tomorrow's ceremonies, and all our Catholic people to pray for both the East Timorese and the Indonesians and that all will accept the call of Pope John Paul II, the Indonesian Bishops' Conference and Bishop Belo, the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, for a renunciation of all recourse to violence as a solution to social conflicts. **(Catholic Bishops of Australia, 6 December 1991)**

* * *

WASHINGTON - Citing the anniversary of the massacre of peaceful demonstrators at a Catholic cemetery in East Timor, Archbishop John R. Roach has written to Acting Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger urging greater U.S. attention to the plight of the East Timorese.

November 12 marks the first anniversary of the brutal slaying of dozens of East Timorese demonstrators in the Santa Cruz cemetery by troops of the government of Indonesia. The response of the Indonesian government to the massacre has been weak and does not begin to address the grievances of the Timorese people, according to Archbishop Roach, Chairman of the International Policy Committee, United States Catholic Conference (USCC)....

Archbishop Roach noted that the U.S. Congress recently expressed concern over the situation by cutting off military training funds for Indonesia, the first time in the nearly 17 years since Indonesia invaded and occupied East Timor that the U.S. government has imposed any concrete sanction on the Indonesian government. This action was supported by the Catholic Conference.

"I respectfully request that you do all possible to encourage the role of the United Nations in monitoring human rights in East Timor and in taking the needed steps to bring about a resolution of the central question of East Timor's political status." **(Archbishop Roach of USCC 10th November, 1992)**

* * *

According to witnesses the armed forces opened fire on people who were participating in a religious ceremony in the cemetery of Santa Cruz.

We have also protested the army's comments which seem to target the pastoral responsibility of the Church in response to her call for justice and peace. **(Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to Bishop Belo on 15th November, 1991)**

* * *

Bishop Deakin's homily on the first anniversary of the deaths in Dili expresses a strong and purposeful anger at the occupation of East Timor. It recounts what so often our memories would wish to dismiss.

Tonight, we remember.

Nearly twelve months ago, many of us gathered in St Patrick's Cathedral to pray for the people of Timor - for freedom and justice, for the right of the people to have some say in their future, for peace. They were the lofty purposes for our coming together on December 7th, 1992. But another event shattered our purpose, and gave us a more urgent reason to pray and remember. It was, of course, the massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery on the outskirts of Dili this day, twelve months ago.

Many of you had relatives and friends there. All of you had fellow country men and women there. Many were shot to death, or died from their wounds, maybe hundreds. Many more were wounded. And many have disappeared..."gone to the hills", their relatives are told, but they are never seen again.

Yes, tonight we remember. But much of the world has tried to forget. Some heard about it, and moved on to other things. Others listened, but made less of it than it really was. Some heard, and suffered with your people. We remember, and are mindful here tonight. So, may I suggest three things for you to consider. But let them not be the only things you, or I, might recall on this first anniversary day of that sad time in Dili.

Firstly, we are mindful of you, of your people in Timor Timur, of those who suffered, who survived, of those who suffered the loss or hurt of others, of those who to this day are deeply angry over the people who did this dreadful thing to your people. We are with you in sympathy and prayer.

Secondly, we are mindful of the truth of the matter that this sorry incident manifests - the presence of an oppressive force in your midst, a force that to this time keeps a hold on you at any price. One price already paid has been the truth. The seeds of disinformation about this affair, as about similar ones in your country of origin, have been scattered far and wide. But the world knows much better about this massacre than it does about others, such as the killing of 500 people at the Shrine of St. Anthony near Lacluta in 1981, or the burning to death of 200 elderly people in their homes at Kraras, near Viqueque, in 1983. And many more. They all tell a story of brutality, suffering and oppression. The world, and that means us also, is very gifted at forgetting such events. God knows, we have had so much practice at it over the last years. But the Dili massacre will not be so easily forgotten. It is so because an English T.V. reporter was in Dili around that time to take shots of another event, the arrival and talks with a Portugese group about the Future of Timor Timur. It did not take place. But a friend persuaded him to go to the cemetery, as it might be interesting. The rest is now history. And the truth...well, we know much of it. Except for one thing... the numbers killed. Not that it matters much whether it was 19, 60 or 250 plus who were killed or later died. It is brutality and oppression any way one looks at it. But it has taken the present, newly-appointed governor in Dili to affirm what some of us had already been told by people who were in the know. It is alleged that he admitted there were 200, and he wished there had been many more. The truth is bad enough in this matter. To have it garnished in this way is debasing and appalling. But we remember. And we pray with you that the truth will not be another victim of this oppression, but that it may become known to all men and women of goodwill.

Thirdly, we are mindful of the present condition of your people...of the suffering, the poverty, the oppression, of the singular lack of human rights we confess to be basic to living on this planet. Let us never shroud these beliefs in the terrible fog of relativising cultural clothing. So let us not sit back and comfort ourselves into inaction by the observation that we cannot expect in Timor the same high level of freedoms we possess in this land, because Timor is part of a republic just beginning to emerge from a struggle with its own period of colonial oppression, poverty and political instability. You may call it political savvy, or savour-faire, or what not to make such a claim. But we may prefer to call it cautious cowardice. If we confess these rights to be basic to people's well-being, or even to life itself, then denial of such rights should be given no shelter, either in political understandings and accommodations, or in the hidden depths of our own compromising minds.

Let us be mindful and remember. Let us pray that these people did not die in vain. May their supreme sacrifice, so brutally snatched from them continue to give witness to those precious values we all surely believe in, and would wish that the people of Timor Timur possess. May their dead rest in peace. And may we never forget what it was for which they died.
Labelé halúha imi nia rain Timor loro
sa-é,

KEDUTAAN BESAR
REPUBLIK INDONESIA

The Catholic Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn, Francis Carroll, speaks to several hundred mourners at the Indonesian Embassy. Picture: Richard Briggs.

CHAPTER SIX

The Future

The Santa Cruz massacre has re-focussed attention on East Timor. The development of UN sponsored talks between Portugal and Indonesia have become more formal in the last year. These talks are now moving to a place where the East Timorese voice is active in the talks campaign.

International Church solidarity has strengthened over the years and the following final statements highlight the Church's commitment to a peaceful and just resolution. With this continued commitment by the Church, the hopes of the East Timorese will always be accompanied by an International call for Indonesia to not harden its heart and for the culture and people of East Timor to be protected and set free.

This is an excerpt from the Pope's speech to the Diplomatic Corps in 1992.

I would not wish to bring to a close this brief look at Asia without mentioning a place of persistent tension: *East Timor* - which I have had the great joy of visiting. A persevering dialogue, which I have called for in the past, is needed so that all the parties which play a role in the life of Timor will lay the foundations for a political and social life in harmony with the aspirations of the people. The Holy See for its part has taken every opportunity, both on the ecclesial level and on the diplomatic level, to invite those responsible and concerned for the well-being of this region to strive to put an end to contrasts which have endured too long.

On 20 February, 1993, His Excellency Mr Antonio Augusto Medeiros Patricio presented his credentials to the Pope. In this response to the new Portuguese Ambassador to the Holy See, the Pope offered his best wishes for the current negotiations about East Timor being conducted by the United Nations with Indonesia and Portugal.

In another area, there is the regrettable dispute between Portugal and Indonesia, with innumerable victims among the beloved Timorese people, whom I was able to embrace during my Pastoral Visit to Dili. Now that there are signs that direct dialogue may be possible the Pope expresses his fervent wish that all those involved will be prepared and committed to achieving it, with a firm desire to face the actual problems serenely and positively, determined to find solutions through dialogue, solidarity and forgiveness. I renew here the appeal I made on that memorable 12 October 1989 to all those having responsibility for life in East Timor, that they "act with wisdom and good will towards all, as they search for a just and peaceful resolution of present difficulties in order to bring about a speedy improvement of conditions of life which will permit (the Timorese) to live in social harmony, according to (their) own traditions and requirements, in serene and fruitful productivity".

On 20th January, 1992, Archbishop Marcel A.J. Gervais of Ottawa and president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote to Bishop Belo. The Archbishop pledges the support of the Canadian Church and offers his hopes for East Timor.

Dear Brother Bishop,

At the beginning of this new year, I want to extend to you the best wishes of the members of the Canadian Episcopate.

I also wish to express our strong support to you as head of the suffering church of East Timor.

Aware of the very serious and sensitive situation with which you and your people are confronted, we will continue to monitor events as best we can. We will also continue to make representations to the Indonesian authorities, and to urge our own government both to protest against the numerous human rights violations and also to promote a global solution to this prolonged conflict.

Be assured of our solidarity and fraternal prayers in Jesus Christ, Prince of Justice and Peace.

On Friday 12th November, 1993 Cardinal Edward Clancy, the Archbishop of Sydney, preached at the mass for the East Timorese community at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. This mass coincided with Bishop Belo's arrival in Australia. The Cardinal looks to what are the necessary freedoms for the people of East Timor.

Suffering is one of the great mysteries of life, and many find in it an obstacle to belief in a good and loving God, while others find it a constant challenge to their faith.

Certainly, suffering has always been a feature of human life, as history attests. Nobody escapes it, as our own experience testifies. The sufferings of some may be mild enough, but many suffer with an intensity that is impossible for others to fully understand.

It is when the innocent suffer that suffering becomes particularly difficult - indeed, impossible to comprehend. And so often, it is the innocent who suffer most. The mystery remains even when we acknowledge that suffering so often proves to be the road to virtue and to holiness of life for certain individuals.

Our Saviour himself does not solve the mystery for us or attempt to explain it away. We can only at best put it down to Original Sin and number it among its consequences. We find a measure of reassurance in the fact that Christ himself suffered as none other has, and it was by voluntarily undergoing his suffering that He redeemed the human race. He did not banish suffering, but He sanctified it, and showed us how to do likewise.

He forecast suffering for the world, and especially for his own friends and followers. *"If the world hates you, remember that it hated me before you... If they persecuted me they will persecute you, too.* (Jn. 15:18ff). However, He promises to those who suffer an ultimate joy that will reduce the most intense suffering to insignificance: *I tell you most solemnly you will be weeping and wailing, while the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy"* (Jn 16: 20). He bids the suffering to earnestly pray, and assures those who are the victims of a hostile and cruel world that in Him, Jesus, they will find peace and victory in the end: *In the world you will have trouble, but be brave: I have conquered the world"*. (Jn 16:13)

But Christ does not teach us passively to accept and capitulate to all forms of suffering - especially that which comes from injustice and the denial of our human rights. We seek to sanctify our suffering, yes, and with St Paul, help to make up what is wanting in the sufferings of our Saviour, but even while doing that, we must strive to secure justice and to claim God-given rights from those who oppress and persecute us.

There are many ethnic groups and minorities in our world today who are suffering oppression and are denied the exercise of their most fundamental rights, and whose basic dignity as human beings is callously abused by brutal usurpers of power. Prominent among such minorities are the people of East Timor.

We are all too familiar with the horrendous events at Santa Cruz on the 12th November, 1991. We know, too, of the treatment meted out to Mr Xanana Gusmao, and of the unexplained disappearance of countless individuals. Innumerable reports from a variety of sources find expression in this statement by Amnesty International about human rights violations in East Timor:

> "These have included extrajudicial execution, torture and ill-treatment, "disappearance", political imprisonment and unfair trial. Political detainees in East Timor are commonly held incommunicado and subjected to torture and ill-treatment in order to extract confessions and political intelligence. During the period of interrogation military and police authorities routinely deny lawyers and representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access to political detainees. All those detained must be considered at serious risk. The use of acknowledged, arbitrary and often incommunicado detention facilitates and even invites torture and other ill-treatment, as a mounting volume of evidence from former detainees makes clear."

It is difficult to believe that such things are happening in such close proximity to Australia. Australia is proud of its reputation in relation to human rights, and, in the councils of the world, is outspoken in their defence. The East Timorese should find their strongest support, and the unfailing advocacy of their cause, in neighbouring Australia. The people of east Timor are our brothers and sisters, and are in desperate need.

We pray today for those who have suffered and died in East Timor. We pray for those who continue to suffer and to live in daily fear of their lives. We pray for the lifting of military oppression from East Timor, and for the return of justice and peace, so that the East Timorese may live again in dignity and freedom.

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ITS AGENCIES' INVOLVEMENT IN EAST TIMOR

Since 1975, Church agencies have supported the East Timorese people in their struggle for self-determination, development and peace.

27th November, 1975 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) sent a telegram to the then caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Andrew Peacock, condemning the reported Indonesian attack on the town of Atabae, and declaring the right of the East Timorese people to be architects of their own social and economic development.

7th December, 1975 Indonesia invaded East Timor.

29th March, 1976 The CCJP called on the Australian government:

- -To seek the withdrawal of all Indonesian troops from East Timor.
- -Press for the establishment of neutral zones in East Timor to permit the return of the International Red Cross, the continuance of humanitarian aid and the evacuation of refugees.
- -Provide facilities to enable refugees to be brought to Australia and accommodated here.
- -Support a United Nations supervised election in East Timor in which all political groupings can partake so as to achieve self-determination for the East Timorese.
- -Lobby for a general amnesty for all those involved in the fighting once it has ceased.

3rd September, 1976 The Australian Episcopal Conference issued a statement of concern for the suffering of the East Timorese people. They called for the admission of international humanitarian aid into East Timor. Finally, the Bishops called on both the Indonesian and Australian governments to facilitate the reunification of East Timorese families separated in the conflict.

6th December, 1976 The CCJP condemned the Australian Government's abstention from voting at the United Nations:

"...on a general Assembly resolution, the substance of which was in complete agreement with the stated policy of the Australian government."

In its press release the CCJP also revealed that "highly reliable sources (Catholic Church sources in East Timor, Indonesia and Rome) had confirmed that the Indonesians were in control of only a minority of the East Timorese population and that the Indonesian Red Cross was limiting the distribution of relief supplies to areas under Indonesian control."

23rd March, 1977 Call to Australian parliamentarians by CCJP to support a full and impartial inquiry into all aspects of the East Timor situation.

22nd January, 1978 CCJP questions the Australian Government's decision to recognise the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia. The Government's action was considered unnecessarily hasty, given the spate of conflicting reports about the extent of Indonesian control and of resistance to the invasion.

29th March, 1982 CCJP presented a submission on the situation in East Timor to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. The submission emphasised the enormity of the loss of life and economic disruption occurring in East Timor, and urged the Australian government to step up both humanitarian aid to East Timor and the family reunion program for refugees seeking resettlement in Australia.

5th October, 1983 CCJP issued a press statement that expressed disappointment with the recently released report of the Australian parliamentary delegation on East Timor. The CCJP claimed that the report failed to clarify the fundamental question of whether the East Timorese people continued in their desire to exercise their right to an act of self-determination. The CCJP requested the Minister for Foreign Affairs to seek approval from the Indonesian authorities for a visit by representatives of Australian non-government organisations to carry out proper investigations.

3rd November, 1983 Monsignor Martinho da Costa Lopez, the former Apostolic Administrator in East Timor visited Australia.

21st February, 1984 Australian Religious Leaders intervention.

9th July, 1984 CCJP urged the National Conference of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) to reaffirm its support for the human rights of the East Timorese people. Drawing on a recent statement by John Paul II, the CCJP reminded ALP delegates that "expediency must not be allowed to become the criterion by which Australia determines its policies".

9th July, 1986 CCJP again approached the ALP National Conference about East Timor. The CCJP criticised the Government's recognition of "Indonesian sovereign authority over East Timor" in 1985 for creating a further obstacle to finding a just solution to the problem.

21st October, 1986 The CCJP wrote to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating its concern with the Australian Ambassador's observation from a visit in 1985, that the human rights situation in East Timor was improving. The CCJP pointed out that the observation did not concur with the Australian Ambassador's observations of international human rights agencies.

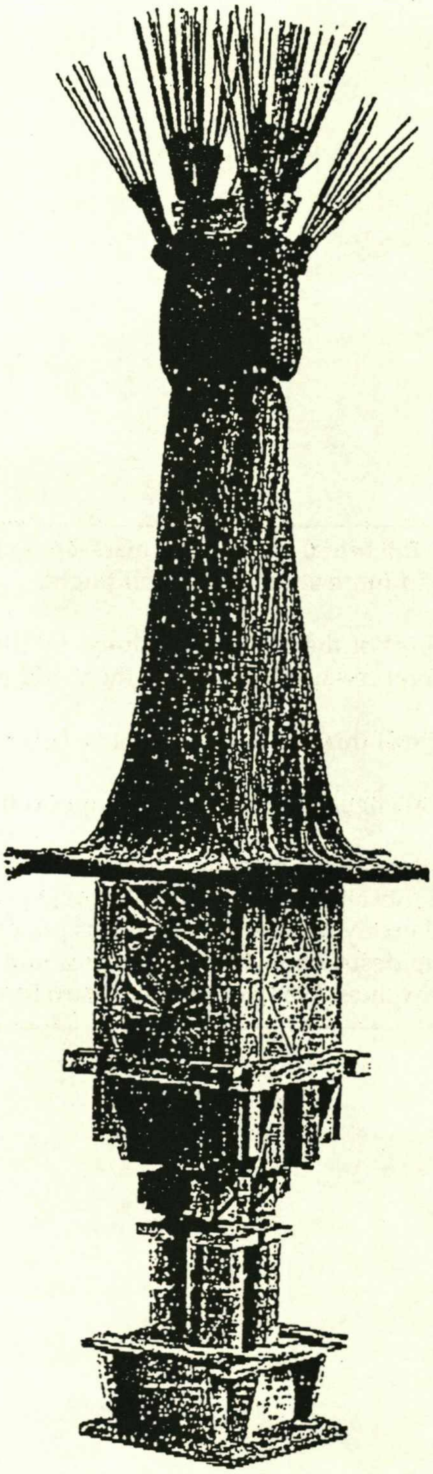
22nd November, 1991 The Australian Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace respond to the Santa Cruz massacre.

6th December, 1991 The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference respond to the massacre.

7th December, 1991 Commemorative Masses around Australia for those killed in the Santa Cruz massacre.

May 1992 The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (ACSJC) publishes "East Timor: Just a political question?" by Dr Geoffrey Hull. Occasional Paper No.11.

14th November, 1993 Collection in churches throughout Australian dioceses on behalf of the East Timorese Church.



CONCLUSION

It took the brutal Santa Cruz massacre to shake the world into recognition that the people of East Timor deserved more attention to their plight.

Conscious of the suffering endured by the people in the past 18 years, there have been many efforts by church representatives around the world to express their concern and solidarity.

Yet little of this has translated into a better life and future for the people of East Timor.

The challenge to the churches to support their brothers and sisters in East Timor remains as strong as ever.

These documents have highlighted the many concerns of the church about the persistent abuse of the human rights and dignity of the Timorese people. In the strategic and economic push into Asia, the rights of this relatively small and defenceless population have too long been overlooked. In times of great isolation and the destruction of their families and land, they emerged stronger in faith and commitment to the Gospel values. We have much to learn from them.

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Louise Crowe	Editor
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RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

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    PO Box 69626, Kwun Tung, HONG KONG.
    Tel. 852-349 6179 Fax 852-772 7656 Telex. 33067 UCANS HX
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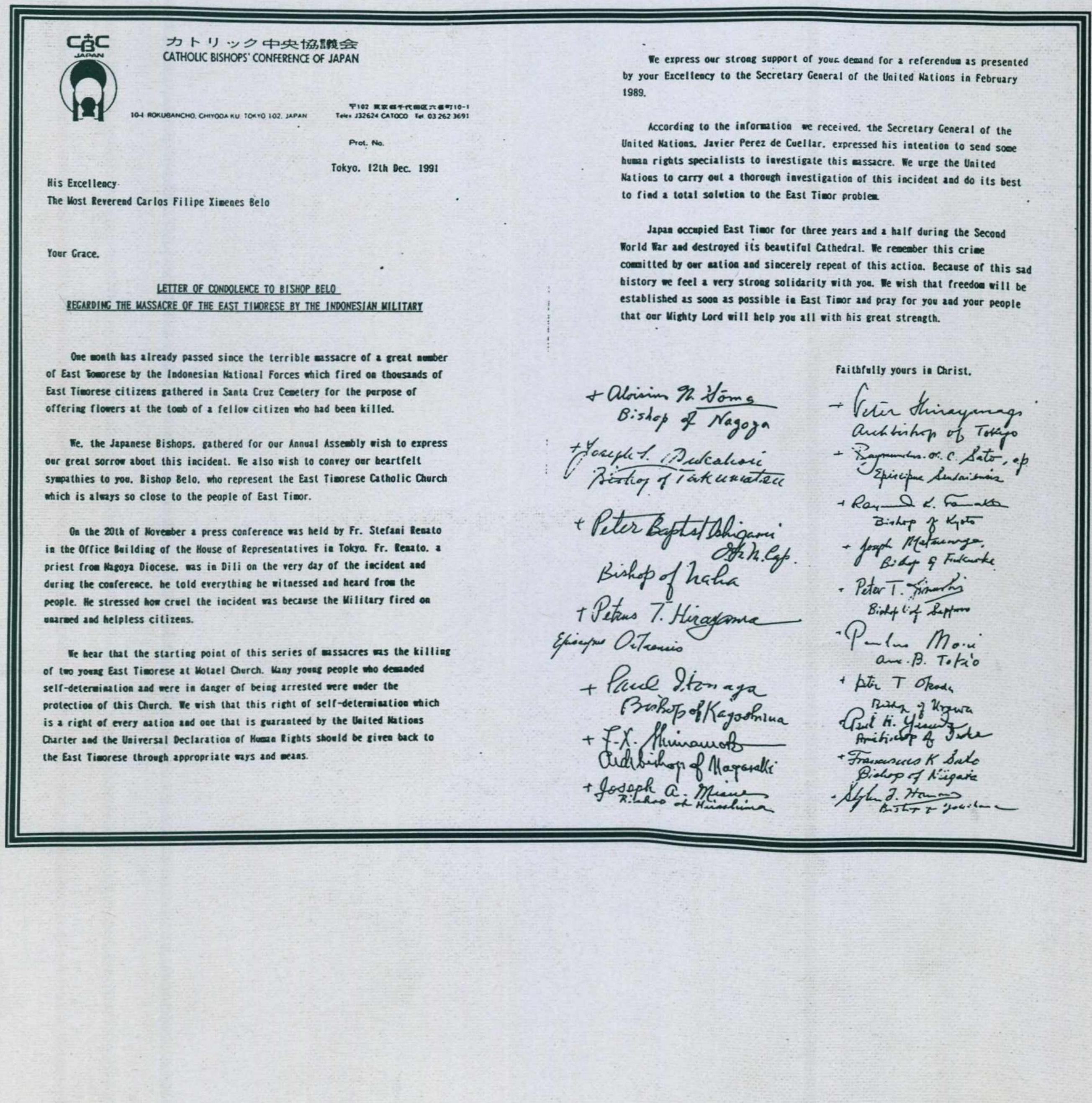
Australian Council For Overseas Aid (ACFOA)
    Napier Street, Fitzroy. 3065
    Tel. 417 7505
    Published *East Timor: Keeping the Flame of Freedom Alive.*
Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
    19 MacKenzie Street, North Sydney, NSW. 2060
    Published *East Timor: A Political Question* by Geoffrey Hull (1992)
Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR)
    Unit 3, Canonbury Yard
    190a New North Road, Islington, London N1 7BJ, U.K.
    Tel. 071-354 0883 Fax. 071-359 0017 EMAIL. (POPTEL) GEO2:CIIR
    Many publications on East Timor including *Timor Link* and *Comments.*
Inside Indonesia
Pax Christi
Sword, Kirsty & Walsh, Pat, *Opening Up: Travellers' Impressions of East Timor 1989-1991.*
    Australian East Timor Association.



カトリック中央協議会
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF JAPAN

10-1 ROKUBANCHO, CHIYODA KU, TOKYO 102, JAPAN
〒102 東京都千代田区六番町10-1
Telex J32624 CATOCO Tel. 03 262 3691

Prot. No.

Tokyo. 12th Dec. 1991

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo

Your Grace.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO BISHOP BELO
REGARDING THE MASSACRE OF THE EAST TIMORESE BY THE INDONESIAN MILITARY

One month has already passed since the terrible massacre of a great number of East Timorese by the Indonesian National Forces which fired on thousands of East Timorese citizens gathered in Santa Cruz Cemetery for the purpose of offering flowers at the tomb of a fellow citizen who had been killed.

We, the Japanese Bishops, gathered for our Annual Assembly wish to express our great sorrow about this incident. We also wish to convey our heartfelt sympathies to you, Bishop Belo, who represent the East Timorese Catholic Church which is always so close to the people of East Timor.

On the 20th of November a press conference was held by Fr. Stefani Renato in the Office Building of the House of Representatives in Tokyo. Fr. Renato, a priest from Nagoya Diocese, was in Dili on the very day of the incident and during the conference, he told everything he witnessed and heard from the people. He stressed how cruel the incident was because the Military fired on unarmed and helpless citizens.

We hear that the starting point of this series of massacres was the killing of two young East Timorese at Motael Church. Many young people who demanded self-determination and were in danger of being arrested were under the protection of this Church. We wish that this right of self-determination which is a right of every nation and one that is guaranteed by the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be given back to the East Timorese through appropriate ways and means.

We express our strong support of your demand for a referendum as presented by your Excellency to the Secretary General of the United Nations in February 1989.

According to the information we received, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, expressed his intention to send some human rights specialists to investigate this massacre. We urge the United Nations to carry out a thorough investigation of this incident and do its best to find a total solution to the East Timor problem.

Japan occupied East Timor for three years and a half during the Second World War and destroyed its beautiful Cathedral. We remember this crime committed by our nation and sincerely repent of this action. Because of this sad history we feel a very strong solidarity with you. We wish that freedom will be established as soon as possible in East Timor and pray for you and your people that our Mighty Lord will help you all with his great strength.

Faithfully yours in Christ.

+ Aloisius N. Sōma
Bishop of Nagoya

+ Joseph S. Fukahori
Bishop of Takamatsu

+ Peter Baptist Ishigami OFM.Cap.
Bishop of Naha

+ Petrus T. Hirayama
Episcopus Oitensis

+ Paul Itonaga
Bishop of Kagoshima

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aux. B. Tokio

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